BILASPUR



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

OLD TEMPLE OF VISHNU, JANJGIR.

CENTRAL PROVINCES DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

BILASPUR DISTRICT

VOLUME A.

DESCRIPTIVE.

EDITED BY

A. E. NELSON, GAZETTEER SUPERINTENDENT.

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1910

PREFATORY NOTE.

The extant Settlement Reports of the Bilāspur District, which have been used in the compilation of this volume, are those of Mr. W. J. Chisholm (1868) and of Rai Bahādur Purshottam Dās (1891). The greater portion of Chapters I, III, V, and VII and the Appendix (with the exception of the article on the Zamīndāris) has been written by Mr. R. V. Russell, I.C.S. The History Chapter and the account of Zamīndāris form a valuable and scholarly contribution from the pen of Mr. Wills, I.C.S. Mr. Hance, I.C.S., Settlement Officer, has supplied the Chapters on Agriculture and Land Revenue Administration. The Chapter on General Administration and the section on Minerals have been contributed by Mr. Turner, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner, who has also read and corrected the whole volume in proof. The account of the Leading Families is based on notes supplied by Mr. S. Atmārām, Extra Assistant Commissioner. Mr. Vredenburg of the Geological Survey is responsible for the section on Geology. Notes on Botany and Forests have been supplied by Rai Bahādur Mansukh Rai of the Forest Department and on Wild Animals by Mr. Gilmore of the same Department; these have been supplemented and revised by the Hon. J. W. Best, I.F.S. The History Chapter and the notes on Castes as usual were based on notes compiled by Mr. Hīra Lāl, Assistant Superintendent of Gazetteer.

NAGPUR:
30th June 1909.

A. E. N.

BILASPUR
DISTRICT GAZETTEER.

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List of Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Bilāspur District.

Names.	Period.	
	From	To
Mr. J. W. Chisholm ...	1-4-64	3-2-67
Captain T. Wakefield ...	4-2-67	12-7-67
Colonel H. I. Lugard ...	13-7-67	22-12-67
Colonel W. B. Thomson ...	23-12-67	23-4-69
Captain J. Ducat ...	24-4-69	8-10-70
Mr. W. L. Noverre ...	9-10-70	29-10-70
Mr. J. F. Beddy ...	30-10-70	31-8-73
Mr. G. J. Nicholls ...	1-9-73	4-1-74
Colonel A. Bloomfield ...	5-1-74	29-5-75
Colonel T. A. Scott ...	30-5-75	18-1-76
Colonel J. Ashburner ...	19-1-76	8-2-77
Colonel T. A. Scott ...	9-2-77	25-4-77
Colonel W. S. Brooke ...	26-4-77	3-1-80
Mr. T. E Ellison ...	4-1-80	28-5-80
Mr. J. P. Goodridge ...	29-5-80	1-4-81
Colonel W. Vertue ...	2-4-81	31-10-84
Mr. L. S. Carey ...	1-11-84	5-11-84
Mr. J. P Goodridge ...	6-11-84	15-11-84
Mr. T. E. Ellison ...	16-11-84	21-2-85
Mr. F. A. T. Phillips ...	22-2-85	24-11-85
Mr. T. E. Ellison ...	25-11-85	10-5-87
Mr. D. O. Meiklejohn ...	11-5-87	30-6-90
Mr. J. A. C. Skinner ...	1-7-90	1-10-90
Mr. D. O. Meiklejohn ...	2-10-90	16-12-91
Mr. A. S. Womack ...	17-12-91	5-4-92
Mr. R. A. B Chapman ...	6-4-92	13-7-92
Mr. A. S. Womack ...	14-7-92	12-5-93
Mr. R. A. B. Chapman ...	13-5-93	2-11-93
Mr. A. S. Womack ...	3-11-93	5-10-96
Mr. L. E. P. Gaskin ...	6-10-96	16-11-96
Mr F. J Cooke ...	17-11-96	14-9-98
Mr. F. C. Turner ...	15-9-98	24-11-98
Mr. R. V. Russell ...	25-11-98	28-11-99
Mr. H. F. Mayes ...	29-11-99	7-3-01
Mr. F. C. Turner ...	8-3-01	27-11-01
Mr. C. W. E. Montgomerie...	28-11-01	24-4-05
Mr. P. S. Patuck ...	25-4-05	22-12-05
Mr. F. C. Turner ...	23-12-05	up to date


DISTRICT
BILASPUR
Scale 1 Inch = 20 Miles
BAGHELKHAND
KOREA
SURGUJA
UDAIPUR
RAIGARH
SAKTI
MANDLA
KAWARDHA
DRUG
RAIPUR
SARANGARH
SAMBALPUR
Amarkantak
Dhanpur
Pasan
Pendra
Gaorela
Khodri
Matin
Uprora
Pondi
Tuman
Kahia
Kenda
Khongsara
Laphagarh
Kosgain
Chhuri
Belghana
Tartuma
Pali
Ghordewa
Korba
Ranigaon
Ratanpur
Lormi
Pandaria
MUNGELI
BILASPUR
Agar R.
Hanp R.
Gatora
Kotmi
Kotgarh
Champa
Madanpur
Sohagpur
Baraduar
To Raigarh
Arbhar
Paraghat
Akaltara
JANJGIR
Bodri
Bilha
Kosa
Khokhra
Bamnidih
Pondi
Jaijaipur
Malkharoda
Dabra
Malhar
Pamgarh
Dongakohrod
Nawagarh
Karnod
Salkhan
Chandarpur
Padampur
Kelo R.
Nipania
Loharsi
Kharod
Birra
Seonath R.
Seorinarayan
Mahanadi R.
From Nandghat
From Drug
From Raipur
To Katni
Son R.
Tan R.
Arpa R.
REFERENCES
Chief Town .... O BILASPUR
Tahsil .... □ JANJGIR
Town or Village .... o Ratanpur
District Boundary ....
Tahsil .... " ....
Zamindari .. " ....
Railway Completed ....
.. Do ... Under construction ....
Class I Road ....
...Do II A Road ....
Government Forest ....
Sakti .... S.
Chandarpur .... ch.
Raigarh .... R.
Udaipur .... U.

BILASPUR DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

BOUNDARIES AND PHYSICAL FEATURES.

Constitution of the new District.

1. The Bilāspur District belongs to the Chhattīsgarh Division of the Central Provinces, and is situated between 21° 37′ and 23° 7′ N. and 81° 12′ and 83° 40′ E. The District occupies the northern portion of the Chhattīsgarh plain or upper basin of the Mahānadi, and includes also a large tract of hilly country to the north. In 1906 the constitution of Bilāspur was entirely altered by the formation of the new Drug District, to which the south-western portion of the Mungelī tahsīl was transferred. At the same time the part of the District lying to the south of the Mahānadi and the Tarengā estate to the south of the Seonāth were transferred to the Raipur District. On the cession of the Sambalpur District to Bengal in 1905, the Chandarpur-Padampur and Mālkharodā estates were transferred to Bilāspur. Prior to these changes the area of the District was 8341 square miles and it was reduced by them to 7602 square miles. It remains the third District in the combined Provinces in point of area and the second in population. The greatest length from Pandaria on the west through Bilāspur to Padampur on the east is about 190 miles and the width from north to south about 80 miles. The District is divided into three tahsīls of which Mungelī lies to the west, Bilāspur in the centre and Jānjgir to the east. It is bounded on the north by the Rewah State of Central India, and those of Korea and Surguja now belonging to the Central Provinces; on the east by the Udaipur, Sakti, Raigarh and Gāngpur States; on the south by Sambalpur, the

Sārangarh State and the Raipur and Drug Districts; and on the west by Kawardhā State and the Mandlā District.

Hills.

2. To the north, west and east the Bilāspur District is enclosed by ranges of hills, while the southern border is generally open and accessible and is marked for the greater part of its length by the Mahānadi and Seonāth rivers. The Maikal range or outer wall of the Sātpurās runs from north-east to south-west along the border, from the peak of Amarkantak in Rewah State to the Sāletekri hills of Bālāghāt. This range culminating at Amarkantak is held to be the eastern limit of the Sātpurā system and from here after a short break of plateau land irregular ranges of hills, which are not considered to belong either to the Vindhyas or Sātpurās, run eastwards leading to the Chotā Nāgpur plateau. On the eastern border the Sakti hills lead almost down to the Mahānadi, thus completing the semi-circular chain, by which the wide plain country is surrounded. The northern hills run along the whole face of the plain, sometimes thrusting forth an arm or throwing out an isolated peak and advancing boldly into the level country, sometimes receding into deep hollows and bays usually covered with luxuriant vegetation. In their whole extent they cover an area of 4500 square miles, while the open plain extends roughly over 3000.

The zamīndāri estates.

3. The hilly country is generally parcelled out into zamīndāri estates held by hereditary chiefs. Of these the District contains ten altogether, but two of them, Madanpur-Kanteli and Chāmpa, lie embedded in the open country. On the other hand the large reserved forest of Lormi belongs to the hills. The most northern zamīndāris are those of Pendrā, Mātin and Uprorā. Of these Pendrā is the largest and lies on the plateau between the Maikal range and those to the east. It presents a varied aspect of hill and dale, consisting partly of dense forest and partly of open populated country. The plateau is about 2000 feet high and the climate considerably cooler than that

of the plain, while the tract belongs both by situation and population rather to the Jubbulpore country than to Chhattīsgarh. Mātin and Uprorā are comprised in the most rugged country of the eastern hill ranges, and are almost covered with forest, the villages consisting only of groups of scattered huts, readily abandoned on the presence in the vicinity of a man-eating tiger or panther, or the outbreak of an epidemic. Mātin has only 22 persons to the square mile and Uprorā 14. 'This,' Chisholm wrote forty years ago, 'is perhaps the 'wildest country of Chhattīsgarh, and here it is that the 'shattered forest trees, the broken and crushed bamboo 'clumps, the hollows and foot-prints in a hundred marshes 'and water-courses indicate the presence of wild elephants.' There are still a few elephants to be found in these estates specially in the rainy season. South of these four estates lie those of Kendā, Lāpha, Chhuri and Korbā which, while consisting largely of hill and forest, have yet with the exception of Lāpha fair stretches of open country. The important Korbā zamīndāri covers the north-eastern corner of the District. To the west the Pandaria zamīndāri consists also of a large open tract adjoining the Mungelī tahsīl, flanked by forest-clad hills of the Maikal range extending to the Mandlā border. The large and compact block of Government forest known as the Lormi reserve, consisting of 410 square miles and extending to the border of the District, separates Pandaria on the west from Kendā on the east. The bulk of the forest is included in this reserve but other small patches lie below the Korbā hills.

The open country.

4. The open country is an undulating plain intersected by a series of convergent streams all ultimately tributary to the Mahānadi. The watersheds between each pair of streams are formed by well-marked rises which as one passes from west to east develop into pronounced ridges. In the Mungelī tahsīl the watersheds are more level than in the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls and on their flanks contain stretches of level

black clay soil, and even on the very crests of the rises the soil is rarely too poor to grow wheat. In the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls the ridges are more pronounced and on their crests the ground is often little more than sandy gravel which improves into culturable land as the slope is descended. There are few of the level stretches of soil which are found in the most fertile tracts of Mungelī and the streams which mark the foot of each watershed flow directly at its feet instead of, as in Mungelī, being separated from the crest of the rise by intervening expanses of level land. The plain is thickly populated and closely cultivated, and the open country as viewed from some such vantage point as the Dalhā hill near Bilāspur presents an absolutely level appearance and is dotted with villages easily distinguishable in the landscape, even when their huts are hidden from view, by the tanks in their vicinity, the waters of which sparkle in the sunlight, or the groves of mango, pīpal and tamarind trees, which cluster round the villages and break the dull monotony of the plain. But except for the village groves trees are very scarce. In the cold weather when the plain is usually visited the surface is an expanse of yellow stubble, standing crops being practically absent, and already presents a bare and dry appearance. During the rains however when the flooded fields are heavy with rice, and the green surface changes in hue as it reflects the shadows of the passing clouds, with the darker green of the forests covering the hilly background, the prospect is beautiful enough.

Nature of soil.

5. The western part of the District is mainly a black soil tract, the soil being formed, it has been suggested, from disintegrated trap rock carried down by the rivers from the Maikal or Sātpurā hills. Here rice is not all-important and a considerable area is devoted to wheat and other cold weather crops alternating with kodon. Second crops are also sown among the standing rice and when the rainfall is favourable give a good yield In the centre and east red soil supposed to

be formed from the Vindhyan sandstone or the Gondwāna rocks of Korbā is prevalent, and is unsuited to cold weather crops, though when assisted by water and manure it yields excellent harvests of rice.

Rivers. The Mahānadi.

6. The drainage system of the District centres in the Mahānadi, and the rivers and streams which flow to it generally rise in the northern and western hills and pursue a southerly and easterly course. The northern hills are however an important watershed and two great rivers, the Nerbudda and the Son, take their rise in them and flow west and north. But these have practically no influence on the drainage system of Bilāspur. The Mahānadi does not flow through the District but forms its southern boundary for a length of about 40 miles. In Bilāspur its bed is open and sandy and the banks usually low, bare and unattractive. In the rains the appearance of the river is magnificent, its width extending over a mile. But in the hot weather months it is nothing more than a shallow and narrow channel in a vast expanse of sand, and is then at almost any point forded with ease. It is navigable for six months from Seorīnarāyan to the coast, but the frequency of rocky barriers lower in its course renders transit difficult, and since the construction of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway the traffic has become insignificant.

The Seonāth and its tributaries.

7. The most important tributaries of the Mahānadi are the Seonāth and the Hasdo. The Seonāth also does not now flow through the District, but forms its southern border for nearly 40 miles prior to its junction with the Mahānadi. It is navigable in the rains up to Nāndghāt. A large number of streams rise in the western hills and pursue an almost parallel south-easterly course, to a junction with the Seonāth. Among these the Hānp rises in the Pandaria hills and traversing Pandaria and Mungelī passes into the Drug District and joins the Seonāth near Nāndghāt. The Sukri and Phonk are tributaries of the Hānp on the west.

The Maniāri rises in the Lormi hills and flows south by east past Lormi and Takhatpur, forming for a great part of its course the boundary between the Bilāspur and Mungelī tahsīls. It meets the Seonāth about two miles above the railway bridge over the latter river and is crossed by the Raipur-Bilāspur road shortly before its junction. The Teswā and Agar are tributaries of the Maniāri, the Agar passing Mungelī town. The Arpā rises on the Pendrā plateau, and, after a long and picturesque course through wooded hills and valleys, enters the plain of Bilāspur, and skirting Bilāspur town falls into the Seonāth near Bartori. The Khārun is an eastern tributary of the Arpā. The Līlāgar rising in Korbā flows to the south, forming the boundary between the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls and falls into the Seonāth just prior to its junction with the Mahānadi.

The Hasdo.

8. The Hasdo is the principal river of the east of the District. It enters the District from Korea State and, after a wild and picturesque course through the rocky gorges of Mātin and Uprorā, traverses Chhuri and Korbā and debouching into the plain passes through Chāmpa zamīndāri and joins the Mahānadi eight miles east of Seorīnarāyan. Its best known tributary is the Jatāshankari or Ahiran river remarkable for its even sandy bed; it rises near the Lāpha fort and joins the Hasdo by Korbā *Khās*. Boats occasionally ply on the Hasdo in the rains up to Chāmpa. Its bed is deceptive and is full of quicksands, so that at all seasons it is necessary to adhere strictly to the regular crossings.

Floods.

9. The rivers of the District, especially the Mahānadi, with which almost all the other rivers of the District are connected, are liable to sudden floods when a vast volume of water is formed often submerging the low-lying land in its vicinity and presenting the appearance of a large inland sea. The most memorable flood—that of the Mahānadi—occurred about 75 years[1]

[1] In Samvat 1891 in the month of Kunwār.

ago and is known as *Baihā pūra* or 'Mad flood.' It extended for miles washing away numerous villages and causing great loss of life and property and did not subside for three days. The scenes described are most pathetic and in some cases dramatic; some families resigning themselves to fate were seen floating on *chappars* (roofs) of their houses, singing to the music of the brass plates, perhaps their most valuable property, which they had not forgotten to take with them even in their hour of distress. The record of this flood is maintained in a verse inscribed on a pillar of Koteshwar temple at Rājim, built at the junction of the Mahānadi and Pairi rivers, by a *sādhu* who remained inside the flooded area for three days, clinging to the top of the tree growing on the platform of the temple. Another flood smaller in magnitude occurred in the year 1885 and washed away the tahsīl office at Seorīnarāyan, which was partly the cause of the removal of the headquarters of the tahsīl to Jānjgir. The people of Seorīnarāyan saved their lives by climbing to the tops of temples. The floods of smaller rivers such as that of the Arpā which submerged the Bilāspur town in 1882, of the Seonāth which washed away villages and caused loss of cattle and other animals in 1891-92, of the Agar which inundated Mungelī in the year 1900, are also locally remembered.

Elevations.

10. In the plain portion of the *khālsa* area of the District, which opens on the south upon the plains of Raipur and is surrounded on all other sides by tiers of hills, the highest points are the isolated peaks of Sonthi and Dalhā with elevations of 2649 feet and 2447 feet respectively above sea-level. The level of the plain country decreases from about 1000 feet in the west of the Mungelī tahsīl to 750 at the south-eastern extremity of the District. Bilāspur town itself stands at an elevation of 853 feet and the Bilāspur court house at an elevation of 888 feet. To the north of Bilāspur, Ratanpur is 993 feet and Bitkuli 827 feet and to the

south Gataurā 913, Bodri 942, Nipania railway station 850 and Kaneri 851. In the Mungelī tahsīl the Kathār hill 6 miles north-east of Lormi is the highest point with an elevation of 2280 feet. Lormi, Līlāpur, Setgangā and Dasrangpur in the same tahsīl have elevations of 1114, 1015, 985 and 999 feet respectively. In the Jānjgir tahsīl the hills of Jogia and Paria are 1113 and 1003 feet high respectively; while the villages of Bāraduār and Saragaon to the east of Jānjgir are 851 and 827 feet respectively and to the south Jaijaipur, Rasotā and Dongākahrod have elevations of 807, 842 and 860 feet. The northern portion of the District is wild and hilly country included in various zamīndāris. In the east of this tract the highest points are Bijorā hill 3346 feet, Mahādeo 3246 feet, Mānguru 3053 feet and Rikhi 2825 feet in Uprorā zamīndāri; and Karelā 3322 feet, Simkide 3128, Gaurduāri 3250, Panakra 3222, Ritrāhi 2865, Kumrā 2836 and Dhaniān 2878 in Korbā zamīndāri. In the central portion of the zamīndāri tract the prominent elevations are Gidhaorā 2853, Makua 2775 and Mātin 2315 in Mātin zamīndāri, Kekril 2826 in Kendā zamīndāri and Palmā 3431, Rāni 2964 and Dhitori 3041 in Lāpha zamīndāri. The Chitaurgarh also known as Lāphāgarh hill in Lāpha zamīndāri is 3244 feet high and at one time occupied a very important position. In the western tract the hill station of Līlawāni attains 3696, the highest point in the whole District, Bārabahār 2924, Gorāpahār 2824, all in Pendrā zamīndāri, and Kundwāni 3041 and Chhuighāt 2919 feet in Pandaria zamīndāri. Besides the above there are many other places in the northern portion of the District whose elevations vary between 1500 and 2500 feet.

GEOLOGY.

Geology.

11. From a geological point of view the Bilāspur District is divided into two portions of contrasted constitution. There is a southern belt running east by south to west by north, with

an average width of 20 miles forming a very flat area at an average altitude of about 1000 feet. North of this flat region the country is very hilly with peaks exceeding 3000 feet, that is more than 2000 feet above the level of the southern plain.

The southern flat area is occupied by horizontal or gently dipping purple shales and limestones belonging to the Raipur series, a member of the Kadapāh system of Algonkian age.[1] These rocks mostly concealed by alluvial and lateritic deposits constitute a portion of the extensive flat expanse known as the Chhattīsgarh basin which, besides the southern part of Bilāspur District, occupies a considerable portion of the Raipur and Drug Districts. Raipur shales and limestones prevail throughout this area. It is only along a narrow discontinuous belt bordering their outcrop that the 'Chandarpur sandstones,' that is the basal members underlying the Raipur series, become visible, forming a raised rim round the Chhattīsgarh basin. In Bilāspur District the Chandarpur sandstones are restricted to a narrow zone extending from about 10 miles east of Bilāspur up to the easternmost boundary of the District. Elsewhere the Raipur series rest directly upon older rocks without the intervention of the basal sandstones.

The northern and hilly part of the District includes a varied assemblage of rock some of which are older, and others newer than the Kadapāh rocks of the southern belt. The rocks older than the Kadapāh system include gneisses of Archæan age and slates belonging to the Dhārwār system of Huronian age, locally known as the Chilpi series. The rocks newer than the Kadapāh system belong to the Gondwāna system and include several subdivisions: the Tālchirs and Barākars (coal-measures) belonging to the Lower Gondwānas of Permian age, and the Kāmthi rocks belonging to the Middle Gondwānas of Triassic age. Of all these rocks occupying

[1]For a brief account of the classification and succession of the various geological systems met with in India, see "A Summary of the Geology of India" (Thacker, Spink and Co., Calcutta, 1909, 2nd edition).

the northern area of the District the older ones prevail in the north-western half, which is occupied almost entirely by crystalline formations of the Archæan gneisses, while the Gondwānas occupy the north-eastern portion.

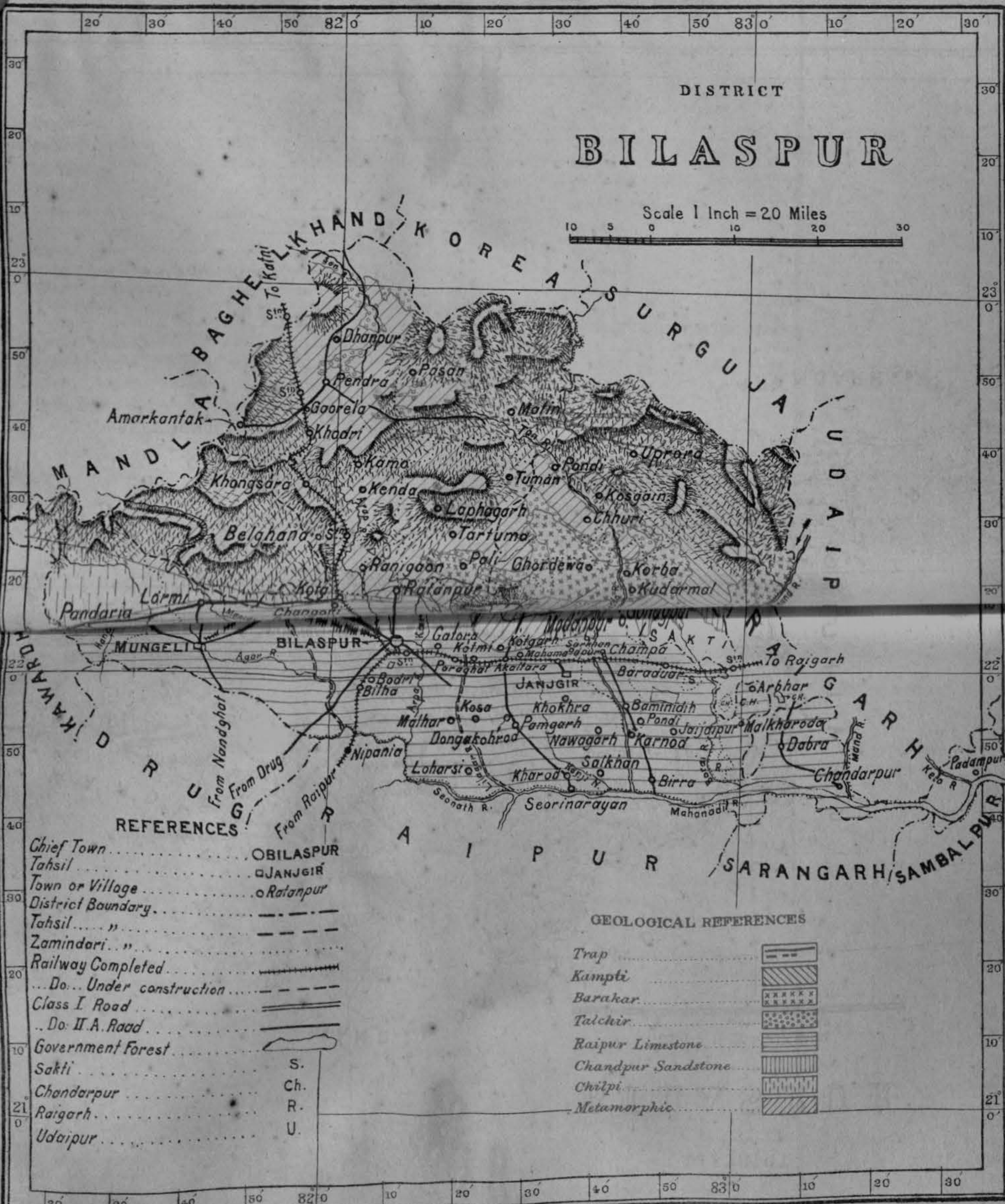
These Gondwāna rocks form a portion of a vast area of Gondwāna beds extending south-eastward into Raigarh, Hingir and Sambalpur. It is only on a geological map illustrating the whole extent of this Gondwāna area that the regular north-western strike of its main stratigraphical features becomes readily appreciable. On a map of a single District which isolates a portion of the Gondwāna basin, the geological boundaries assume a somewhat confused appearance, and the distribution of the several subdivisions can best be understood by a reference to the annexed geological sketch-map. The basal beds or Tālchirs include greenish sandstones and shales through which are scattered large boulders regarded as of glacial origin. The Barākars include white or grey sandstones interbedded with shales and coal seams. There are two patches of these rocks along the Mānd and Hasdo valleys, constituting the Mānd and Korbā coal-fields, separated from one another by a lofty hill mass constituted by the massive red sandstones of the Middle Gondwāna or Kāmthi. Intrusive dykes and sills, some of which are of very large size, consisting of basalt and dolerite of the age of the Deccan Trap (Upper Cretaceous) often intersect the Gondwāna rocks.

The territories constituting the Bilāspur District come within the area described by Ball in 'The Geology of the Mahānadi Basin' (Rec. G. S. I., Vol. X, pages 167 to 186), and by King in 'The Chhattisgarh Division' (Rec. G. S. I., Vol. XVIII, pages 169 to 200).

BOTANY.

Trees.

12. *Sāl* or *sarai* (*Shorea robusta*) is the principal timber producing and prevailing species; it is gregarious and retains its leaves throughout the greater part of the year; the best specimens of *sāl* are found in the forest of the Lormi range where in



Helio., S. I. O., Calcutta.

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Reg. No. 2597E. 08.—H.—450.

favourable localities it attains a girth of eight or nine feet and a height of about ninety feet. It is very sensitive to frost and drought; consequently the majority of specimens are poor compared with those in other parts of India. Teak, *sāgon* (*Tectona grandis*), is found indigenous only in the Sonākhān range. Its qualities are too well known to require mention here. *Bījasāl, bīja* or *bijrā* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*) is another valuable timber ranking next to teak. On account of the close grained structure of the wood, the timber is sometimes used for making drum cases of the Indian country *dhol.* This species also yields the gum 'kino' of commerce. The *siris* or *shīsham* (*Dalbergia latifolia*) is another dark coloured wood used for ornamental furniture making. *Sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*) is found in extensive quantities, but the timber is not much valued locally although it attains large dimensions; the bark is however used for tanning and the ash remains of the wood are the village Dhobi's washing material. The tree yields gum when tapped. *Kahuā* (*Terminalia Arjuna*) is the graceful tree found along water-courses. The wood has no better value as timber than *sāj*. *Dhaurā* (*Anogeissus latifolia*) makes very strong cart axles. The bark is locally used for tanning. *Senhā* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*) is the most popular timber of the agriculturists. *Kalmī* or *haldū* (*Adina cordifolia*) yields a beautiful yellow timber which could be used for furniture making. *Murhī* (*Stephegyne parvifolia*) yields timber of a little lighter colour than *kalmī.* Mango (*Mangifera indica*) grows wild in groves along water-courses and is better known on account of its fruit than its timber. The tree is capable of being infected with lac. *Gūlar* (*Ficus glomerata*) and *jāmun* (*Eugenia Jambolana*) grow wild along nullah banks; the timber is much used for the manufacture of well curbs, and the fruits are edible. *Gumhār* or *khamhār* (*Gmelina arborea*) is sometimes valued as timber for furniture making *Karrā* (*Lebidieropsis orbicularis*) s the main house building wood of the poorer classes. *Dhāman* (*Grewia tiliæfolia*) makes fine cart shafts. *Tendū* (*Diospyros

tomentosa) produces an inferior kind of ebony. The fruit is eaten and the wood is fairly good for cart shafts. *Tinsā* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*) is a strong, heavy and flexible timber much used for making cart shafts and naves. *Bhirā* (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*) is the satin wood tree. The country is not favourable for its growth and the tree does not attain a sufficient size to be valued as timber, nor does it here develop the shining appearance for which it is especially prized. The leaves of the tree are used locally to destroy insects. *Kusam* (*Schleichera trijuga*) is the principal lac-bearing tree. The seed yields a valuable oil. The timber is sometimes used for making local oil-extracting machines. *Palās* (*Butea frondosa*) is another lac-bearing species. The tree yields a red gum. Its flowers which have a radiant hue are used for colouring; and its roots are utilised for tying ox yokes and the roofs of houses. *Ghont* (*Zizyphus xylopyrus*), *ber* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*), pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) and *gasti* (*Ficus infectoria*) are other trees on which lac is sometimes found. The ripe fruit of *chār* (*Buchanania latifolia*) is eaten and the seed coat ground or broken to get the *chironjī* of commerce. *Aonlā* (*Phyllanthus Emblica*), and *baherā* (*Terminalia belerica*) yield the myrobalams of commerce. The *aonlā* bark is used for tanning hides. A red dye is obtained from a decoction of the bark of *rohan* (*Soymida febrifuga*) which is also used as a fever mixture by the villagers. *Bargā* (*Kydia calycina*) yields fibres for rope-making. *Khair* (*Acacia Catechu*) is also a timber tree of some value, as grain-pounders (*mūsal*) are made of its wood. The poorer classes also use it for house posts. The chief use of the tree is however for *katthā* or catechu manufacture. The powder on the fruits of *rohni* (*Mallotus philippinensis*) is used in dyeing silks and is called *kamelā*. *Galgal* (*Cochlospermum Gossypium*) is a soft-wooded species of no value either as timber or fuel. The wood is sometimes used by villagers for torches. *Salai* (*Boswellia serrata*) grows usually on the poorest of soils where nothing else will live and for this reason is usually gregarious.

The wood is used for making match-sticks and boxes, but is brittle and does not ignite well in the wet season for which reason it is fast losing its popularity in the match factory at Kotā. The tree yields a gum which burns readily with a pungent odour. The branches of the tree are used in wedding ceremonies. *Ghonjā* or *ghoinjā* (*Odina Wodier*) is another species used for match-stick manufacture. *Semar* grows along river banks and is the most valuable wood for the match factory. *Kīka* (*Garuga pinnata*) and *kurlu* (*Sterculia urens*) are species which are valued only for their gums. *Gandhrī* (*Acacia leucophlœa*), *padāl* (*Stereospermum suaveolens*), *bhawarmal* or *kūmbh* (*Careya arborea*), *kasai* (*Bridelia retusa*), *dhobni* (*Dalbergia paniculata*) and *tilai* (*Wendlandia exserta*) possess no special local quality. *Imli* (*Tamarindus indica*), *nīm* (*Melia indica*), *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*) are not indigenous forest trees but occur throughout the District. They are generally met with on old deserted sites of villages. *Bakain* (*Melia azadirachta*) is of rare occurrence; *harsinghār* (*Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*) is famous for its sweet-scented flowers whose red stalks give a yellow colour; the leaves can also be used for polishing wood work. *Bar* (*Ficus bengalensis*) is a large ever-green tree with a spreading crown throwing down numerous aerial shoots from the branches. The twigs are a favourite fodder for elephants and the fruit is sometimes eaten by children. *Bel* (*Aegle Marmelos*) is the sacred tree of the Hindus. The pulp of the ripe fruit is a laxative and mixed with a little milk and sugar makes a very agreeable cooling *sherbat*. The unripe fruit either boiled or roasted is used as a specific for diarrhœa and dysentery. The pulp is also used to strengthen lime mortar. The mucus with which the cells of the fruit are filled is used for adhesive purposes. Mahuā (*Bassia latifolia*) is valued for its seeds and flowers. The former yield an oil which is used by villagers both for lighting purposes and as a cheap substitute for *ghī* with which it is mixed. Country liquor is distilled from the flowers which are also used as food stuffs by poor people.

The wood would be valuable as timber but for its toughness which resists the action of the saw. *Bohar* (*Cordya Myxa*) yields fibres for rope-making. The leaves are cooked as vegetables and the fruit is eaten. The fruit of *amerā* (*Spondias mangifera*) is eaten either raw or cooked and is sometimes made into pickle. The bark of *korai* (*Holarrhena antidysenterica*) and its leaves and seeds (called *indrajava*) are used as a cure for dysentery. *Bhilawā* (*Semecarpus Anacardium*) is the marking-nut tree. The cup of the ripe fruit is eaten raw, dried or roasted. An oil is extracted out of the seeds which is said to be a pain-killer. The pulp of the ripe fruit of *dhanbaher* (*Cassia fistula*) is a strong purgative. The wood is used as a threshing post in Chhattīsgarh. The leaves of *sonpān* (*Bauhinia variegata*) are exchanged between friends and relatives at Dasahra as a good omen. The leaves of *amli* (*Bauhinia malabarica*) are cooked as a vegetable.

Shrubs and bamboos.

13. Of the shrubs the following deserve mention:— The seeds of the *kharhar* (*Gardenia turgida*) produce a lather when mixed and rubbed with water, which is then sometimes used to wash clothes. The wood is very flexible and can be bent round to prepare frames of the *dhaplā* or *chang* (an Indian rustic drum). *Dhawai* (*Woodfordia floribunda*) is a shrub with red flowers. *Dikāmāli* (*Gardenia lucida*) yields a resin useful as an insect-killer. The unripe fruit of the *mainphal* (*Randia dumetorum*) is used to poison fish. *Makai* or *makor* (*Zizyphus Oenoplia*) is a straggling and thorny shrub giving only good fencing material to the agriculturist. The fruit is eaten. *Mārorphal* (*Helicteres Isora*) is known by its twisted fruit and the bark is utilised for making rope. *Dendrocalamus strictus* is the common bamboo of the hills. *Bambusa arundinacea* is cultivated and is found wild in damp localities.

WILD ANIMALS, ETC.

Fauna.

14. *Elephas indicus*, wild elephants (Hindi *hāthi*, Chhattīsgarhī *hathia*), were formerly found in the forests of Mātin and Uprorā

zamīndāris in considerable numbers, but there are very few left now. In the rains they wander as far afield as the Chhuri and Korbā jungles and the Lormi forest.

Semnopithecus entellus, the Bengal Langur (Hind. *langūr*, *karmuhā*, Chhattīs. *bendrā*).—Is found in all parts of the District being fairly common in the forests. It causes a good deal of damage to crops and fruit trees and is considered more or less sacred by the natives. Cases are on record of large males chasing natives who have tried to drive them off their crops.

Macacus rhesus, the small common red faced monkey (Hind. *bandar*, *lalmuhā*, Chhattīs. *bendrā*).—Is not so common as the *langūr*. It generally inhabits slopes of hills with a southern aspect near nullahs and rivers. It is often to be seen in captivity and is used for begging and other purposes.

Felis tigris, the tiger, (Hind. *bāgh*, *sher*, Chhattīs. *baghwā*).—Is found in all the forest tracts of the District. It does not run to the great length of the Bengal tiger but is generally a very heavily built animal. The largest male tiger shot in these parts measured 10′ 2″ in length. Females average above 8′ 6″ in length. The tiger is very destructive to game and cattle, and in the hot weather they will often follow a herd of tame buffaloes for months killing every third or fourth day. As a rule tigers breed in February and March, the tigress generally throwing two or three cubs. The cubs remain with the mother for about three years, when they are almost full grown. In the wet weather tigers retire to the hills following the game and avoiding flies. Cases are known of tigers dying from wounds caused by porcupine quills. A white tiger was shot in the Pendrā zamīndāri five years ago, the skin being exhibited in the Central Provinces Exhibition of 1908-09.

Felis pardus, the pard or panther (Hind. and Chhattīs. *tenduā*).—Is fairly common in all parts of the District. It is comparatively fearless of man and consequently very

destructive to cattle, goats and dogs. There are reported to be two or three varieties of this animal in the District, but there are no reliable data to support this supposition.

Felis chaus, the common jungle cat (Hind. *jungli billi, ban billi*, Chhattīs. *ban bilwā*).—Is fairly common all through the District frequenting both jungle and open grass country. It feeds on the smaller game such as the partridge, hare and peafowl.

Viverra malaccensis, the lesser civet cat (Hind. *mushak billi, kastūri*, Chhattīs. *bignaori*).—Generally found in forests living in holes in the ground or trees. Feeds on small birds and animals. More than one at a time are rarely seen.

Herpestes pallidus, the mongoose (Hind. *newalā*, Chhattīs. *newarā*).—Very common throughout the District. Is not shy and will often enter human dwellings in search of food. Is easily tamed if caught young. Is extremely agile.

Hyæna striata, the striped hyæna (Hind. *lakarbaghā*, Chhattīs. *rerwā*).—Is found in all parts of the District. A cowardly brute, living chiefly on carrion, but is not above taking a village goat now and then. Is almost entirely nocturnal and lives in burrows.

Canis pallipes, the Indian wolf (Hind. *bheria* or *bighanā*, Chhattīs. *bigwā* or *hundrā*).—Is fairly common in the central and southern parts of the District and has sometimes done a great deal of damage, frequently attacking and carrying off native children. It generally hunts in small packs.

Canis aureus, the jackal (Hind. *gīdar* or *syār*, Chhattīs. *kolihā*).—Very common throughout the District except in very heavy forest which he apparently does not frequent. They frequently are attacked with rabies.

Canis rutilans, the Indian wild dog (Hind. *sonkuttā* or *bankuttā*, Chhattīs *sunhā* or *kogwā*).—Does much damage to game more particularly in the hot weather. It will attack almost any animal and is reported to attack even the tiger. Hunts

in packs from ten to fifty. The wild dog has wonderful powers of scent and hunts by daylight.

Vulpes bengalensis, the Indian fox (Hind. *lomri*, Chhattīs. *lakhurri*).—Is very common in the open country.

Melursus labiatus, the Indian sloth bear (Hind. and Chhattīs. *bhālu*, *rīchh*).—Found in all the hilly forests of the District. A large male will measure over 6 feet from snout to root of tail. Females average about 5 feet 6 inches in length. Does damage to fruit trees. She-bears with cubs, or any bear if suddenly disturbed, will attack human beings. It is easily tamed if caught young. The female has as a rule two cubs, born about January or February and carries them on her back. Is almost entirely nocturnal, sleeping nearly all day in caves or under trees in some shady spot.

Lepus ruficaudatus, the common Indian hare (Hind. *khargosh*, Chhattīs. *lamhā* or *bhathailā*).—Very common especially in bush jungle. Natives often have regular hunts for them and kill a good many in nets.

Sus cristatus, the Indian boar (Hind. *suar*, Chhattīs. *barhā*).—Found throughout the District. It is most destructive to cultivation. They are usually found in large sounders.

Sciurus palmarum, the common ground squirrel (Hind. *gilahri*, Chhattīs *chilhrā*.)—Very common in all parts of the District.

Sciurus maximus, the Central Indian red squirrel (Hind. *karat*, Chhattīs. *ghaniāri*).—Is found in a few special localities only away from human habitations.

Gazella Bennettii, the Indian gazelle (Hind. and Chhattīs. *chinkāra*).—Found in most parts of the District. Is not partial to forests, living mostly in sandy ravines, covered with bush jungle. Is exceedingly restless but never moves far away from one spot.

Antilope bezoartica, the sasin or Indian antelope (Hind. *hiran*, Chhattīs. *harinā*, *karsāyal*, with big horns).—Is found in the central parts of the District frequenting cultivated

ground to which it does considerable damage. The bucks do not run to any great size, the horns being much smaller than those that can be obtained in other parts such as Berār and Central India. The horns of this animal are used by natives as decorations in their marriage ceremonies and also as an article of commerce for making fancy goods.

Portax pictus (*Bos Elephas Tragocamelus*), the Nilgai or blue bull (Hind. *nīlgai*, Chhattīs. *guraya līlgai* or *rojhina*).—Fairly common throughout the District both in thick forest and in sparsely covered jungle. The male does not attain his iron grey colour till almost full grown, young males being the same colour as females. Lives in herds and feeds mornings and evenings and throughout the night. Can be made to carry a pack. The flesh is coarse. Females have been known to develop the iron grey colour which males attain at maturity but such cases are rare.

Tetraceros quadricornis, the four-horned antelope (Hind. *chausinga*, Chhattīs. *kotri, ban-bakri, char-singhā*).—Common in all the forests. Is very shy and difficult to get a shot at. The anterior horns are often only small knobs and in some cases are absent.

Gavæus gaurus, the gaur (Hind. and Chhattīs. *gaur*).—Found in forests to the north-west and south of the District, generally in herds of from 5 to 30 owned by one big bull. Bulls are often solitary either having been turned out of a herd by reason of old age or else being too young to own a herd. Old bulls are almost black. They have been known to charge when wounded. This animal prefers hilly ground and lives on leaves and grass, young shoots of the bamboo being a favourite food It is extremely shy. In the rains the gaur retires to the tops of the hills to get away from the flies. It is seldom molested by a tiger. A full grown bull stands between 17 and 18 hands at the withers.

Cervulus muntjac, the muntjac or rib-faced deer (Hind. *kakur*, Chhattīs *bhaserā*).—Fairly common in all the jungles

of the District. Is generally found alone. Utters a short bark, not unlike that of a terrier, when alarmed.

Rusa Aristotelis, the sāmbhar (Hind. and Chhattīs. *sāmbhar*).—Found only in the more remote forests. Is almost entirely nocturnal in its habits. Horns are valuable both as trophies and as an article of commerce. The skin of the sāmbhar is exceptionally useful as a leather for boots, etc. Stags shed their horns in April.

Cervus axis, the spotted deer or chītal (Hind. and Chhattīs. *chītal*, male *dhānk*).—Is found throughout the forests of the District, living in herds. Prefers more open forest than the sāmbhar and never ranges far from water. Stags usually shed their horns in July.

Rucervus Duvancelli, the swamp deer (Hind. *bārasinghā*, Chhattīs. *bagdaria*).—Found in open *sāl* forests and grass glades. The appearance of the animal is singularly like that of the European stag. A good head is 37 inches long and has 12 points. The rut takes places in December and January, when the stags are very noisy and pugnacious, the whole forest ringing with their most peculiar call. After the rut the stags leave the hinds. The horns fall in April and at this season they assume the summer coat which exhibits distinct indications of spots and markings similar to those habitually worn by the *chītal*. Their food consists almost entirely of grass.

Memimna indica, Indian mouse deer (Hind. *pisuri*, Chhattīs. *khabri*).—Found in dense forests nearly always solitary. Are very timid and look extremely delicate. About the same weight as a hare. Make excellent pets when caught young.

Hystrix leucura, the white tailed Indian porcupine (Hind. *seyi*, Chhattīs. *saihā*).—Fairly common.

Lutra vulgaris, the common Indian otter (Hind. *pani-kuttā*, Chhattīs. *ud*).—Found in all the larger rivers which flow through the District.

Pteropus medius, the flying fox (Hind. *warbaghul*, Chhattīs. *chamgidrī* or *gīdur*).—Huge colonies of these large

fruit eaters are often to be seen hanging on tamarind trees. The natives kill large quantities of them by putting nets round fruit trees, but this makes little difference in their numbers. They drink in the evenings by flying over water and dropping down every now and then in their flight. The natives assert that their flesh if boiled down makes a good medicine for rheumatism.

Birds.

15. All the usual game birds are found in the District, duck and snipe being fairly common in the cold weather. The demoiselle crane visits the Mahānadi in the cold season. The peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) is common in forests where dense forest exists with water and cultivation close at hand. The spur and jungle fowls are met with only in hilly tracts. The grey partridge (*Ortygornis Ponticerianus*) is common in low jungles round cultivation. Sand-grouse are also found in one or two places but are rare. The bustard (Chhattīs. *homa*) is rarely found. The bush quail (*Perdicula Asiatica*) known locally as *lavā* and the grey quail (*Coturnix communis*) called *chimuk* are common. They resort to grassy plains and scrub forests. The *gundru* or bustard quail (*Turnix Pugnax*) frequents jungle wastes and the *turadabkī* or the little button quail (*Turnix Dussumieri*) is common over the grassy plains of the District. The spurred goose *nuktā* (*Sarkidiornis melanonotus*), the goose-teal *girjā* (*Nettapus coromandelianus*) and the whistling teal *silli* (*Dendrocycna Javanica*) breed in trees and resort to tanks and *jhīls*, staying throughout the year. Green pigeons (*harial*) are found in wooded tracts feeding on various wild fruits. The blue rock pigeon *kabūtar* (*Columba intermedia*) haunts large buildings such as temples, tombs and mosques and also large solitary trees. Species of herons and egrets commonly called *buglā* by natives are usually found round tanks, marshes and river banks. The plumes of these creatures are much in demand. Besides these the following birds are also found in the District :—swallows and swifts or *bayā* or *abābil*, king fishers or *kilkilā* much sought after for

their skin and feathers, wood-peckers called *lakarphors* abounding in wooded tracts and sometimes found in gardens and in the avenues of trees planted on roadsides, shrikes or *lahtorā* inhabiting open jungles, drongo shrikes called *bhīmrāj* and also fly-catchers, mynas and sparrows found in the open and wooded tracts of the District.

Fish.

16. The rivers are well stocked with numerous kinds of fish which are a favourite article of food among nearly all classes. The principal varieties found are—large variety, *parhan*, *rechhā*, *rehu*, *bausin*, *pariyans*, *kalānt*, *mundā*, *kaunchhi*, *kotrā*, *sinlan*, *sawar* or *sanwal*, *kusrā;* small variety, *singan* or *kewai*, *mongri*, *kārijenwa*, *sauri*, *tengnā*, *gungwāri*, *kotri*, *bām*, *mohrāli*, *gurdā*, *phalia*, *galāj*, *kokya*, *singi*. The most abundant are *pariyans*, *kotrā*, *kotri* and *kokyā*. The Mahānadi, the Seonāth, the Arpā, the Maniāri, the Hasdo, the Khārun, the Līlāgar and the Hānp rivers and the Ratanpur tanks are the principal source of supply. The Seonāth and the Mahānadi especially contain a large variety which sometimes weighs over 20 seers. A considerable quantity of fish is consumed in the District and the prevalence of leprosy lends some support to Dr. Hutchinson's theory connecting fish eating with that disease. In the Mahānadi there is a *dahrā* or deep pool near Jaitpur and Barekel villages, from which many cartloads of fish are annually extracted. Numbers of small fish are captured during the monsoon months in the rice fields and sometimes in creeks filled by the back waters of the rivers in flood. In the rice fields wicker baskets are placed at the drainage openings of the fields to catch the fish. The various methods in use in the District for catching fish are as follows:—(1) The *mahājāl* or great fishing net used in very large streams. Two are taken from different directions towards one central point, the fish being driven by beating the water to the point where they are caught between the two *mahājāls*. (2) The *pāt* or long net secured at both ends with pegs like a tennis net. Fish are driven towards it and then caught with

mahājāls. (3) The *sokhi* or *bhanwar jāl* is a cast net. It has iron weights attached to it and is thrown in the water so as to enclose a circular space about 8 to 10 feet in diameter. The outer end throughout the circumference has a lining of loose netting which collects all the fish falling within the circle when drawn in by the rope attached to the centre of the net. (4) The *pailnā* or small net used chiefly for taking prawns and small fish. It is a hand net fastened to a triangular frame. (5) The *halkā jāl* or frame net. This is something like a large netting basket, the mouth being about 7 × 10 feet stretched by two bamboo pieces crossing each other diagonally. The mouth is placed to face the stream supported by a small stick attached to the back. The water is then beaten with sticks. The fish run into the net and are caught. (6) *Hariyāl* is a funnel or cone-shaped bamboo net and is placed over a shoal of small fish, but only one or two are caught at a time. (7) *Danwar* is a baited night or day line with several hooks attached to one string. (8) *Dhir* is a bamboo wicker work placed at the opening of the fields. (9) *Khāndi* is a cage-like bamboo trap which like a mouse trap lets in fish and prevents their egress. The smallest sized meshes seen in the District are one-fifth of an inch from knot to knot. It is impossible for the smallest fish to get out of these traps. At the close of the rains when the waters subside fish are caught by the method known as *ulechnā*. Women partition out the shallow water with mud and with a basket throw out water from one compartment to the other. When one compartment gets very shallow they catch the fish without difficulty.

RAINFALL AND CLIMATE.

Rainfall.

17. Rainfall is registered at the three tahsīl headquarters, at the zamīndāri headquarters of Pendrā, Korbā and Pandaria and at Pondi in the Lāpha zamīndāri. The last four stations have only been opened a few years ago. The average rainfall of the District for the 40 years ending 1906-07, being the mean of the

tahsīl figures, was 48 inches, or one inch more than that of Raipur District. The separate figures for the tahsīls are Bilāspur 47 inches, Mungelī 45 inches and Jānjgir 50 inches. The returns of Pendrā and Korbā for the six years ending 1905-06 indicate that, as might be expected, the rainfall is considerably heavier on the forest-clad plateau to the north. For this short period Korbā has an average of 56 inches and Pendrā of 57. The figure for Pandaria is 46 inches or a little more than for Mungelī. The maximum and minimum annual amounts registered at each tahsīl station during the last 40 years are:—

	Maximum.	Year.	Minimum.	Year.
Bilāspur ...	80	1877-78	30	1886-87
Mungelī ...	86	1876-77	21	1873-74
Jānjgir ...	77	1896-97	25	1868-69

During the period of 40 years the average District rainfall was less than 40 inches in ten years and above 50 inches in eighteen years. It is apparent from the statistics that the Mungelī tahsīl receives substantially less rain than the remainder of the District. As this area is largely a black-soil tract and grows a considerable proportion of spring crops it requires less moisture than the yellow rice-land of the south. But it is the case also that during the succession of bad years in the nineties the west of the Mungelī tahsīl like the whole belt of black-soil country lying below the Maikal range appeared to fare worse than the rest of the Chhattīsgarh plain and, after the Vindhyan plateau, was perhaps the most uniformly unfortunate tract in the Province. Nearly 44½ inches of the annual District total are received during the five wet months from June to September divided roughly as follows:—June 8 inches, July 14½, August 12½,

September 7½, and October 1½. The fall for the remaining seven months is a little more than 3½ inches.

Climate.

18. The District has no observatory in the plains, but the climate closely resembles that of Raipur.[1] The headquarters station of Bilāspur is believed to be a little cooler than Raipur, owing to the fact that it stands on black instead of red soil. In May the thermometer rises to nearly 116°, but its usual range is from 82° to 107°. In July the range of temperature is much smaller being from 75° to 87° on an average, while in January the average maxima and minima are 82° and 55°. There has been since 1903 an Imperial observatory at Pendra Road station on the Katnī Branch of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. Its records show an average range of temperature from 70° to 105° in May with an actual maximum of 108°, from 70° to 90° in July, and from 41° to 83° in January with an actual minimum of 39°. The hot winds blow from the middle of April to the middle of June and the heat is at times very trying. But occasional thunderstorms are obtained and afford a cool day now and again. During the nights throughout the hot weather there is usually a light cool breeze. In the rains the heat is much less, but the dampness of the atmosphere produces sensations of enervation and discomfort. In the northern plateau the climate is much cooler, resembling that of Jubbulpore, but from July to January there is much malaria.

[1] Statistics of temperature for Raipur are given in the Gazetteer of that District.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

HISTORY.

A Brāhman story.

19. According to local tradition Ratanpur, the ancient capital of Chhattīsgarh, has existed throughout the four cosmic periods of the world, and has changed its name at the end of each period. Its original name was Manipur. When the next age began in which God incarnated himself as Rāma, the hero of the Rāmāyana, it was changed to Mānikpur. In the third age it was named Hīrāpur, and now in the Kali or iron age it is called Ratanpur. All these names are synonyms meaning 'the town of precious stones.' In the third age, we are told, Krishna the incarnation of God visited this 'town of virtuous kings.' The reader of the Mahābhārat will remember, perhaps, the adventures of Arjun and his horse. The story is that a Rājā named Mayūrdhwaj, or Mūratdhwaj, was reigning at Ratanpur when Krishna was upon the earth. To consolidate his kingdom Mayūrdhwaj deputed his son Tāmradhwaj to make a tour through the territory south of the Vindhyas and east of the Maikal range. Tāmradhwaj started forth prepared to wage war against any chief who seized the richly caparisoned and riderless charger which preceded him, this act of seizure involving according to custom a claim to equality and independence. In the course of his journey Tāmradhwaj encountered another horse with a golden plate on its forehead bidding similar defiance to all-comers. He had it seized and brought to his camp. The horse was Arjun's who soon followed with his army and gave battle. The fight lasted till evening and Tāmradhwaj found that he had lost ground. Perplexed and dubious, he consulted his aged priest who told him that Krishna was on the side of Arjun, and that further resistance would bring disaster.

Thus advised Tāmradhwaj fled with his followers by night to Ratanpur bringing Arjun's horse with him and there at his father's capital awaited his enemies. Finding on the morrow that his opponent had fled, Arjun decided to follow him to Ratanpur. But Krishna interposed and forbade Arjun to engage in battle saying that Mayūrdhwaj was his (Krishna's) friend, and a devout and exemplary prince whom it would be a crime to injure. It was necessary however that Arjun's horse should be restored, and Krishna himself undertook to find a peaceful solution of the difficulty. Leaving Arjun's army behind, Krishna entered Ratanpur as an old Brāhman accompanied by Arjun as his son. First they wandered through the town, of which a glowing description is given; and then Krishna proceeded alone to the Rājā's palace. It was the well-known custom of Mayūrdhwaj to give immediate audience to all Brāhmans from a foreign country, to hear their experiences and to grant any wish they might express. Krishna accordingly announced himself at the palace gates as a Brāhman from a distant country, and was at once admitted to the Rājā's presence.

Krishna :—O Rājā, I am a Brāhman of the land of Dwārka, a priest to the great and mighty family of Yādavas. I ask alms of no man, and though I am now in sorrow, your money cannot lighten my burden.

Rājā :—Is there naught I can do? For though I am the prince of a great country my chief joy is to promote the happiness of Brāhmans.

Krishna :—I will tell you my story. I have an only son, and hearing of the fairness of the daughters of this distant land, I travelled here to get him married. On the way to your city, a tiger seized my son. I offered myself in his stead without avail, but finally the tiger consented to release him on one condition, and as this condition concerned your highness, I had made bold to approach your presence. But now that I am here, I tremble with fear and my lips refuse to utter the tiger's cruel terms.

Rājā :—Speak Brāhman, my wealth, my kingdom, my all, are at your disposal, if so be I can save your son.

Krishna :—I cannot tell you, and must therefore only bear my grief.

Rājā :—I command you to speak, and promise, on my honour as a Rājput, compliance with the tiger's conditions whatever they be.

Krishna :—Then hear O Rājā. It is with sorrow I utter the words, but the tiger releases my son only on one condition, that of receiving half of your body.

Rājā :—I shall keep my word, it is his.

No sooner had the Rājā given his promise, which those about him well knew he would never abandon, than Krishna was besieged with entreaties to interfere and prevent the sacrifice. The Rāni Kumud Devi, with affectionate logic, pleaded that a wife was half her husband and that therefore she should be taken; Tāmradhwaj urged that a son represented a part of his father, so that his person might fairly be accepted. Assailed on all sides Krishna rose to leave, when Mayūrdhwaj stepped forward, and sending for a saw, commanded his wife and son each to hold an end and commence sawing his body from the head downwards. No sooner had the cruel ceremony commenced than the left eye began to water copiously. Krishna at once interfered, and declared he could accept no offering which was evidently made with such reluctance. Then Rāni Kumud Devi addressed Krishna, 'Think not, O Brāhman, that my husband relents. See you 'not that the left eye only weeps, and well it may, for 'while the right side of the body is to do honourable service 'in saving the life of a Brāhman, thus attaining blissful 'immortality; the left, severed and forsaken, will, like the 'refuse of the earth, be food only for jackals and birds of 'prey; and so it weeps.' Charmed with the ready wit of the woman, Krishna revealed himself, and showered blessings upon Mayūrdhwaj for his nobleness of character. He then introduced Arjun whose horse was restored, and finally

they took Mayūrdhwaj as their guest to the great capital of Hastināpur. The tank, near which Arjun's horse is supposed to have been tied, is still called the 'Ghorbandha Talao.'[1]

This interesting story is of course purely imaginary, but one curious result of the tradition connected with Krishna's visit is that the use of the saw was entirely prohibited in the Chhattīsgarh country, and was only introduced under the Marāthā rule during the time of Rājā Bimbāji. Mr. Chisholm tells us that formerly evidence of this was found in all old buildings, the beams of which were always squared with a hatchet. It has been moreover the general belief of the people of Chhattīsgarh that all the Haihaya kings had a slender mark running from the nose up the skull to the back of the head, just so far as the head of Mayūrdhwaj was sawn before Krishna intervened.

Early history. The Guptas.

20. In spite of the undoubted antiquity of the Haihaya family and the legends so proudly related of them by the Chhattīsgarh people, recent research has definitely proved that they did not enter Chhattīsgarh until about the 10th century A.D. Prior to this there were other rulers whom we can safely trace back to the 4th century A.D. The country was then known as Kosala or Mahā Kosala, or Dakshin (South) Kosala to distinguish it from a country of the same name in the north towards Oudh. Mahā Kosala, it is said, was named after Kusa, a son of Rāma the hero of the Rāmāyana, as Lahore (Lavapur) was named after another son named Lava. In the middle of the 4th century this country was ruled by two kings. One named Mahendra held the north, while the southern portion known as Mahākāntāra (literally, the Great Forest) was held by Vyāghrarāja or the Tiger king. These kings are mentioned in the Allahābād pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta which states that they were

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[1] Chisholm's Settlement Report of 1868, paras. 42 to 45.

captured by him and then liberated.[1] Samudra Gupta was the son of Chandra Gupta I, the founder of the early Gupta dynasty of Pātaliputra or Patnā and of the Gupta era (320 A.D.) From the moment of his accession, Samudra Gupta assumed the part of an aggressively ambitious monarch, and plunged into wars which occupied many years of an unusually protracted reign. After subjugating the Rājās of the Gangetic plain, he embarked on an adventurous campaign in the remote south, and marching from his capital (Patnā) through Chutia Nāgpur, attacked the kingdoms of south Kosala in the valley of the Mahānadi and overthrew Vyāghrarāja and Mahendra. Still advancing southwards, Samudra Gupta subjugated all the countries down to Conjeeveram south of Madras, and then returned homewards through the western part of the Deccan subduing on his way the Marāthā country and Khāndesh. No attempt was made to effect the permanent annexation of these southern States. But the Mahā Kosala kings, apparently considering it to their advantage to enjoy the protection of a great monarch like Samudra Gupta, continued to acknowledge the overlordship of the Gupta dynasty for nearly a century after its empire had broken up. This fact is inferred from an inscription recently found at Arang in the Raipur District which records the grant of a village made by a certain Rājā Bhīmsen and *is dated in the Gupta year* corresponding with the end of the 6th century A.D. The charter was issued from the banks of the Son river which rises near the Amarkantak hills, and mentions places which Mr. Hīra Lāl has located in the Raipur District.

The Sirpur dynasty.

21. No information is available as to who this Bhīmsen was, or how long his family continued to rule in Mahā Kosala. In the 7th century the country seems to have passed to a Buddhist king who made Bhāndak in the Chānda District his capital. Bhāndak was visited by the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsiang in 639 A.D. and he has given the following description of

[1] Fleet's Gupta Inscriptions, page 12.

what he saw:—'This country, more than 6000 *li*[1] in circuit, was surrounded by mountains and was a succession 'of woods and marshes, its capital being above 40 *li* in circuit. 'The soil of the country was rich and fertile; the towns and 'villages were close together; the people were prosperous, 'tall of stature and black in colour; the king was a Kshatriya 'by birth, a Buddhist by religion, and of noted benevolence. 'There were above 100 Buddhist monasteries, and about '10,000 Brethren, all Mahāyanists. Near the south of the city '(that is, apparently, the capital) was an old monastery with 'an Asoka tope where Buddha had vanquished Tīrthikas by 'the exhibition of supernormal powers, and in which Nāgar-'juna Pusa had afterwards lodged.'

A branch of the Bhāndak family soon after settled at Sirpur on the banks of the Mahānadi in the Raipur District. It is possible that the capital being situated at a great distance, it was thought desirable to send a representative to the Mahānadi plain. However this may be, it did not take long for the Sirpur branch to become independent of the original house, and within four generations they acquired the sovereignty of the whole of Mahā Kosala. They adorned their capital with beautiful temples, monasteries, alms-houses and gardens, making it worthy of the name they gave it. But by the reign of Tīvardeva their prosperity was at its highest. This king had no issue and the crown therefore passed to his brother's son. The next king was Mahāsiva Gupta entitled Bālārjuna. He was a great temple builder, and almost all the inscriptions found at Sirpur eulogise him. His mother was a daughter of the king of Magadha. When left a widow she constructed the superb brick shrine known as the Lakshman temple, the only old edifice now remaining in Sirpur in anything like a fair state of preservation.

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[1] A *li* is about one-fifth of a mile. This quotation is taken from Watter's Yuan Chwang, Vol. II, p. 200.

22. Mahāsiva Gupta was perhaps the last king of this dynasty who ruled at Sirpur. His son seems to have been ousted by another family, and to have fled eastwards to Vinītapura, which Mr. Hīra Lāl has identified with Binkā in the Sonpur State. Of the new reigning family very little is known beyond the names of two kings, Mahāsudeva and Mahājayarāja, who made grants of villages located in different parts of the country, indicating that at least the tract lying between Bilāspur and Khariār (north and south), and Raipur and Sārangarh (west and east) was in their possession. These records show that their capital was Sharabhpur, which has not yet been identified. It is quite possible, however, that this was merely a new name imposed on Sirpur, the capital of their predecessors, and that the name perished with the short-lived dynasty which created it. Unfortunately neither the inscriptions of the Sirpur dynasty nor of their successors are dated, but the characters in which they are written belong to the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. The events related above cannot, therefore, have taken place very many years before the Haihayas first came upon the scene, and conquered the country which they held so long.

The Sharabhpur dynasty.

23. The name Haihaya is derived from 'Ahihaya' (snake-horse), the story being that the first ancestor of this line of kings was the issue of a snake and a mare. These kings trace their origin to Sahasrārjuna or Kārtvīrya, who had a thousand arms. The family was a very ancient one and is mentioned in the Mahābhārat. These Haihayas were known as Kalachuris, and originally ruled the Chedi country which Justice Pargiter places along the south bank of the Jumna, from the river Chambal on the north-west about as far as Karwi (north-east of Chitrakūta) on the south-east. Its limit southward was at first the plateau and the hills of Bundelkhand.[1] But gradually the frontier was pushed forward until by the

The Haihayas.

[1] Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal, 1895, page 253.

beginning of the 10th century A.D. it commanded the whole line of hills, from Amarkantak to beyond the Hasdo, which immediately abutted on the Mahānadi plain. In a Ratanpur inscription of 1114 A.D. it is stated that among the Haihaya princes who ruled in Chedi was a certain Kokalla. (His approximate date is 875 A.D.) He had 18 sons, the first-born of whom became ruler of Tripuri, the capital of Chedi, while the remaining brothers were made lords of subordinate estates (*mandalas*). The southernmost of these *mandalas* were Komo,[1] Tumān and probably Kosgain—the three ancient towns whose ruined temples and tanks amid the forest and hills north of the Mahānadi plain have long been a puzzle to archæologists. Tumān, we learn from the same inscription, eventually passed to a descendant of the Haihaya holder of this *mandala*, whose name was Kalingarāja; and to him is to be ascribed the credit of first establishing the Chedi power in what we now call the plains of Chhattīsgarh. 'He abandoned his ancestral land,' we read, 'and acquired 'by his two arms the country of Dakshin Kosala. Since 'Tummāna had been made a royal residence by his ances-'tors, therefore residing there he increased his fortune 'causing the destruction of his enemies.' We need not suppose that Kalingarāja immediately severed all connection with the central power at Tripuri when he first obtained a foothold in the Mahānadi plain. Probably for some generations the suzerainty of the head of the northern Chedi kingdom was at any rate formally recognised, while Kalingarāja and his son and grandson continued to extend their own authority below the hills. It is difficult to define the extent of Kalingarāja's conquests. So far as we can gather, he and his son and successor Kamalrāja merely made extensive raids from Tummāna and so brought a large area of country into nominal submission. They did not probably attempt to oust the local chiefs among whom the new country

[1] The Komo *mandala* presumably lay north and south of the famous pass from which it took its name, and its headquarters may be safely identified with the old ruined town of Dhanpur in the Pendrā zamīndāri.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

OLD TEMPLE AT PALI.

was already partitioned, and who on acknowledging the new suzerain retained the same semi-independence as before.

Founding of Ratanpur.

24. But the son of Kamalrāja and grandson of Kalingarāja by name Ratnadeva (I) took, when he came to power, a momentous step in the history of Chhattīsgarh. Not content with making Tumān 'pleasant to the eye' by constructing temples to Vankesa, to Ratnesvara and other gods, with 'a garden containing innu-'merable flowers and beautiful fruit and a charming high 'mango grove crowded with palatial buildings,' he determined to push his fortunes in the plains, and about the year 1050 A.D. founded the now famous town of Ratanpur. From this time the rulers of the Tumān *mandala* must have become virtually independent sovereigns. It is probable that Ratnadeva I did not at once break with the kings of Tripuri, for we learn that he married a daughter of the Komo chieftain, who, as we have seen, held one of the adjoining *mandalas* of the older Chedi kingdom. But it is quite clear that at the time the inscription was composed (A.D. 1114) from which this information has been drawn, the chiefs of Tumān had developed into independent kings of Ratanpur. The expansion of their power was very rapid. Nothing much was effected under Ratnadeva I, and his son Prithvīdeva I (circa 1090 A.D.). Of the latter we know no more than that he built a temple to Siva in Tumān and constructed a large tank in Ratanpur. Tradition tells too of a ten years' war waged about this time with a wild mountain chief named Ghughus, possibly a Gond, who infested the hills quite close to Ratanpur; and this foe (whose name still lives in the Ghughsa Pahār) doubtless occupied attention near at home and prevented expeditions of aggrandisement. But under Prithvīdeva's son and successor Jājalladeva I great things were accomplished. He still it appears kept on friendly terms with the parent house in Tripuri, but in his own right entered into alliance with the kings of Kanauj and Jejabhukti or Bundelkhand, while the chiefs of the *mandalas* not only of Dakshin Kosala but of countries as far afield as

Wairāgarh, Lānji, Bhandāra and Kimedi paid him an annual tribute. This king also, it appears, built the famous temple and tank at Pāli on the road between Tumān and Ratanpur. Jājalladeva I was succeeded in turn by his son Ratnadeva II and grandson Pritvīdeva II, whose reigns were chiefly remarkable for the successes obtained on their behalf by a family of military adventurers (the most famous of whom was Jagapāl), who rendered them service for three successive generations. The record of their exploits is preserved in the Rājim inscription of 1145 A.D. Under these kings the Komo *mandala* was wrested from the allied kingdom of Tripuri from which the Ratanpur Haihayas themselves had sprung, and Jagapāl extended the Ratanpur authority as far as Drug, Sihāwa, Kānker, and Kāndadongar (in the south of Bindrā-Nawāgarh), beyond the southern confines of the present Raipur District. In all, the Haihaya conquests of the 12th century would seem to have encompassed an enormous area. Their influence may be said to have extended from Amarkantak to beyond the Godāvari, and from the confines of Berār in the west to the boundaries of Orissa in the east.

The consolidation of the kingdom.

25. Now this hegemony was of the flimsiest kind. The 'conquered' countries for the most part remained in the hands of really independent Rājās who tendered only a nominal allegiance to Ratanpur. But the extent of the Haihaya authority gave the successors of Prithvīdeva II a long period of rest from external attack, and thus, it appears, enabled them to consolidate their power nearer home. It seems certain that this process consisted in the formation of a number of *chaurāsis* (administrative units of 84 villages) which were made over to immediate dependents of the Haihaya kings. This was done of course at the expense of the petty local chieftains, mostly Gonds, whom at first the Haihayas had been content to tolerate. In accordance with this policy relatives and dependents of the Rājput kings were gradually introduced, practically as government officials,

to the general control of all the country in the neighbourhood of Ratanpur, while only the more distant tracts were left in the hands of their old holders as tributary chiefs. The change of course was gradual. It was one thing to demand acquiescence from the old local chiefs and another to uproot them altogether. But the process continued steadily during the 13th and 14th centuries, until not only were the conventional 18 *chaurāsis* established north of the Seonāth, but the same number were formed south of it through the enterprise of a junior member of the Ratanpur house. This prince, by name Simhana, established himself in semi-independent state in Raipur. As an inscription (1414 A.D.) at Khalāri puts it he 'conquered 18 *garhs* of adversaries'; which may be taken to mean that he crossed the Seonāth, ousted a number of local chieftains, already no doubt in formal subjection to the Ratanpur throne, and established a new administration with its centre at Raipur, just as his ancestors had issued from Chedi and established the kingdom of Ratanpur. It does not concern us to follow the fortunes of the Raipur branch. But their establishment beyond the Seonāth is clear proof of the rapid development of the Haihaya power in the 13th and 14th centuries. More than this we cannot say, for the course of events during this period is very vague and the inscriptional evidence is scanty and disconnected.

The kings of Ratanpur.

26. To return to the line of Ratanpur kings, Prithvīdeva II we learn was succeeded by his son Jājalladeva II in whose reign a member of the family built a temple at Seorīnarāyan in which a slab is found with an inscription dated in the Chedi era 917 or 1165 A.D. A Brāhman also built a temple of Siva at Mallār with a stone inscription dated 1167 A.D. Jājalla II is called in this inscription the ruler of Tummāna which shows that, though no longer the royal capital, Tummāna retained its reputation as the earlier home of the Chhattīsgarh princes. The son and successor of Jājalla II was Ratnadeva III in whose reign an inscription

was set up in a temple at Kharod in the year 1181 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Prithvīdeva III in whose reign one Devanāga built a temple at Samba and left an inscription there, dated 1190 A.D. But here inscriptional evidence of the succession to the senior branch at Ratanpur abruptly ceases, and for the rest it must suffice to quote, for what it is worth, the Brahmanical lists of the Haihaya kings preserved in Ratanpur. We begin arbitrarily with Bhānusingh who, we must suppose from the date assigned to him, was an early if not the immediate successor of Prithvīdeva III, the last king mentioned in inscriptions.

			Circa
Bhānusingh	...	...	1200 A.D.
Narsinghdeva	...	...	1221 "
Bhusinghdeva	...	..	1251 "
Pratābsinghdeva	...	...	1276 "
Jayasinghdeva	...	...	1319 "
Dharmasinghdeva	...	...	1347 "
Jagannāthsingh	...	...	1369 "
Vīrasinghdeva	...	...	1407 "
Kalmaldeva	...	...	1426 "
Sankar Sahai	...	...	1436 "
Mohan Sahai	...	..	1454 "
Dādu Sahai	...	...	1472 "
Purushottam Sahai	...	...	1497 "
Bāhar Sahai	...	...	1519 "
Kalyān Sahai	...	...	1546 "
Lakshman Sahai	..	...	1583 "
Sankar Sahai	...	...	1591 "
Kumud or Mukund Sahai		...	1606 "
Tribhuvan Sahai	...	...	1617 "
Jagamohan Sahai	...	...	1632 "
Adati Sahai	...	...	1645 "
Ranjīt Sahai	...	...	1659 "
Takht Singh	...	...	1685 "
Rāisinghdeva	...	...	1699 "

		Circa
Sardārsingh	... ...	1720 A.D.
Raghunāthsingh	... ...	1732 ,,

This list gives on an average 21 years to a generation, and at any rate from 1500 A.D. may be accepted as accurate enough. There are two stone inscriptions of Bāhar Sahai, one in the Mahāmaya temple of Ratanpur (undated); the other from Kosgain.[1] The latter was dated but unfortunately the date is now broken off. From it we learn that there was during this reign a Muhammadan eruption from the north, which the Rājā successfully resisted driving back the invaders. As general history, however, does not show that any Muhammadan army ever visited this part of the country, the 'Pathāns' whom Bāhar Sahai defeated must have been a small force under some needy adventurer in search of plunder. It is not till the reign of Bāhar Sahai's son Kalyān Sahai, about 1550 A.D., that the overpowering influence of Muhammadan sovereignty extended into a region so land-locked and isolated as Chhattīsgarh. The annual crowd of pilgrims who flocked from the upper provinces through Ratanpur to Jagannāth, must often have spoken in glowing language of the pomp and splendour of the Mūghal court of Delhi. Whether excited by curiosity, or impelled by fear lest his kingdom should be absorbed it is impossible to decide; but Kalyān Sahai determined on proceeding to Delhi and having audience of the great Akbar. He made over the management of his country to his son Lakshman Sahai and, accompanied by a large body of followers, started on his mission. It is said that he was absent about eight years, and returned to Ratanpur laden with honours, and invested with the full rights of Rājā and a high sounding title.

The internal administration of the Haihaya kingdom.

27. A 'Revenue Book,' said to be of Kalyān Sahai's reign, was shown to the Settlement Officer of 1868 and contained much interesting information about the

[1] Now in the Nāgpur Museum.

condition of Chhattīsgarh under Haihayavansī rule. The Ratanpur government, including Raipur, then comprised, it was stated, 48 *garhs* or *chaurāsis* yielding a revenue of 6½ lakhs of rupees, which, considering the relative value of money in those early days, indicates a large share of prosperity. The jurisdiction of the Haihayas extended over a very wide country. Kawardhā, Khairāgarh and the other zamīndāris skirting the western hills had lapsed it appears to the Gond dynasty of Mandlā. But in addition to the Chhattīsgarh[1] proper which they held in their own hands, the neighbouring hill states noted in the margin all paid tribute to them. These states were noted[2] as subordinates or rather tributaries of the Haihayavansī kings, that is, as within their hegemony but not incorporated in the area under their direct control.

1. Rāmgarh.
2. Partābgarh (now Pandaria).
3. Lānji.
4. Ambāgarh Chaukī.
5. Bastar.
6. Khariār.
7. Phuljhar.
8. Sārangarh.
9. Karond (Kālāhandī).
10. Sambalpur.
11. Patnā.
12. Singhbhūm.
13. Chandarpur.
14. Sakti.
15. Raigarh.
16. Kauria.
17. Surguja.

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[1] Considerable ambiguity is involved in the use of the term 'Chhattīsgarh.' In the current meaning of the word it includes not only the three Districts of Bilāspur, Raipur and Drug with all their zamīndāris, but also the wide tract of Chhattīsgarh Feudatory States.

In Haihaya times, as explained in the text, the Chhattīsgarh (if the term was used at all) can have denoted only the two score or more of petty *chaurāsis* under relatively close control, *as distinct from* the large tract of outlying country in which tributary Chiefs retained a semi-independence.

In Marāthā times this older meaning of the word seems to have been retained At any rate Blunt in 1795 expressly distinguishes at least two Feudatories (Kānker and Bastar) subordinate to Ratanpur from the 'Chhattīsgarh' of his time. With Sir R. Jenkins we get confusion. He seems to hesitate between the new meaning and the old. In one place he writes that the tribute 'of the zamīndārs of Chhattīsgarh and Gondwāna' was reduced to Rs. 13,432. An examination of the text will show that the 'Chhattīsgarh' here referred to excludes not only Bastar, Kālahandī and Kānker (which constituted his Gondwāna) and all the Khaloti zamīndāris (Nāndgaon, Khairāgarh and Dongargarh, etc.), but also Pandaria and Kawardhā. It therefore comprised outside the modern *khālsa* country only the petty estates (Sonākhān, etc.,) in the crook of the Mahānadi and the 8 Kawar zamīndāris in the north-east of Bilāspur. This is the Haihaya meaning of the word. But on the other hand the phrase 'zamīndāris of Chhattīsgarh' is used by Sir R. Jenkins in particular reference even to Kālahandi and the Khaloti estates; and is applied by him generically to *all* the estates whether *chaurāsis* or feudatories under the Raipur Superintendent with whom engagements were made in 1821. This last meaning is the one now current.

The name Chhattīsgarh seems to be of comparatively modern origin. It is entirely unknown in inscriptions.

[2] See Hewitt's Raipur Settlement Report of 1869, para. 56.

The army maintained by Kalyān Sahai was not of a formidable character. The following details of its strength are given:—

Swordsmen	...	...	...	2000
Daggermen	...	...	...	5000
Matchlockmen	...	...	...	3600
Archers	...	...	...	2600
Horsemen	...	...	...	1000
	...	Total	...	14,200

There was also an establishment of 116 elephants. Such a force was fully adequate for the maintenance of internal order, and considerably greater than could be brought together by any of the surrounding chiefs.

The Chhattisgarh.

28. This 'Revenue Book,' as it is called, contains the only native reference known to us bearing upon the internal administration of the Haihayavansī kingdom. The barren list of kings interspersed with tales of huge conquest, which forms the bulk of the history of Chhattīsgarh, gives by contrast an additional value to this short account. The book (from which quotations were freely made in the first Settlement Reports of Raipur and Bilāspur) is itself no longer in existence, and we are therefore unable to test its genuineness as a contemporary production of the 16th century. But as the earliest record of the traditions of Haihayavansī rule it is of the first importance. With its assistance, and by inference from the many relics of older times still traceable in the District, we can reconstruct in rough outline the Haihaya organisation of the country. We find, within Chhattīsgarh proper as distinct from the outlying tributaries, a curiously well-developed administrative system; a regular official hierarchy centering in the king and broadening down through several grades to the headman in charge of individual villages—the village being then, as always, the administrative unit. The chief administrative officials who dealt directly with the king

were known generally as Diwāns, each of whom was in charge of a separate *garh*. These *garhs* were more commonly known as *chaurāsis* (tracts of 84 villages) though several of them were only *beālisis* (of 42 villages) or even *chaubīsis* (of 24 villages).[1]

In the Revenue Book 48 *garhs* were noted. The following is the fullest list now extant of those situated north of the Seonāth river in the kingdom of Ratanpur proper :—

			Villages.
	1.	Ratanpur	... 360
	2.	Māro	... 354
3. Bijaipur.	1.	Bijaipur	... 40
	2.	Lormi	... 84
	3	Rāmgarh	... 42
	4.	Ranjanmahaur ...	... 24
	5.	Mailwār	... 12
	6.	Takhatpur	... 124
4. Pāndarbhātha.	1.	Nawāgarh	... 42
	2.	Dewarbīja	... 84
	3.	Patharia	... 24
	4.	Pāndarbhātha ...	... 42
	5.	Mungelī	... 42
	6.	Pāndarbhātha Bantārgarh	... 42
	7.	Maldā	... 24
	8.	Dewarhāt	... 24
	5.	Kharaudgarh ...	... 145
	6.	Kotgarh	... 84
7 Madanpur.	1.	Madanpur	... 67
	2.	Umreli	... 34
	3.	Nawāgarh	... 52
	8.	Kantulāgarh... ...	... 84
	9.	Kosgāgarh	... 220
	10.	Uprorāgarh	... 84
	11.	Lāphagarh	... 200
	12.	Kendāgarh	... 84

[1] For these terms see Baden-Powell's Indian Village Community, p. 198.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

OLD DOORWAY BUILT INTO WALL OF FORT, RATANPUR.

		Villages.
13.	Mātingarh	84
14.	Sonthīgarh	84
15.	Okhargarh	32
16.	Semariagarh	84
17.	Kanrikarkati, 2 *garhs*	700
18.	Pendrā	84

There are some variant lists of these 'Forts.' All of them are liable to be partially discredited because the compiler has felt compelled to limit his list to 18 forts on either side of the Seonāth. But this number was merely conventional. We have already seen in the Ratanpur inscription of 1114 A.D. how Kokalla had 18 sons, the eldest of whom became king of Tripuri, while each of his brothers received a subordinate estate (or *mandala*). So too according to tradition, there were 18 forts in the kingdom of Sambalpur which was for some time known as 'Atharāgarh.' Again Ratanpur was credited with 18 forts and so too the separated kingdom of Raipur. As a matter of fact the number of *garhs* was constantly fluctuating. These kingdoms at no time necessarily contained only 18, any more than the *garh* itself (or *chaurāsi* as it was more commonly called) necessarily contained 84 villages, or the smaller *barhon*, to which we shall presently refer, necessarily contained exactly 12 villages.

The official hierarchy.

29. Subordinate to the Dīwān who administered the *garh* were the *Daos* who administered the *barhons*. The *barhons* were groups usually of twelve, but often of only five villages. As the *Rāj* was divided for administrative purposes into *garhs*, so the *garh* was divided into *barhons*. The former existence of the *Daos* is being rapidly forgotten; for they were ousted wholesale under the first British Superintendent of Chhattīsgarh owing to the abuse of this office by the Marāthās, who made a practice of giving the *barhons* to needy Brāhmans. But traces of this old tenure still survive, especially in the zamīndāris (*e. g.*, in Pendrā where the *barhons* were only broken up in 1881).

Subordinate lastly to the *Dao* were the *gaontias*—the village headmen—who dealt direct with the rank and file of the tenantry, and so formed the lowest grade in the administrative hierarchy. The prime duty of this official staff of Dīwāns, *Daos* and *gaontias* consisted in the proper collection and transmission of the revenue. This revenue was paid by the husbandmen and was appropriated by the Rājā. The intermediate official classes were simply authorised to finger it and pass it on, receiving presumably some small rebate on the amount of their collections.[1] Thus they were in the last resort officials and officials only. They possessed no lien upon or legal title to the areas whether large or small entrusted to their charge. Each office was impartible and non-transferable. It could be held only by a single person and by him only with the approval of the sovereign. But, as always in the East, lapse of time gave rise to customary rights which in the end revolutionised the position of this large official class. In the first place, every office became hereditary, but, at the same time, so much was conceded to the origin of the tenure that its transmission was still limited to a single person. Thus primogeniture was introduced. This principle has long been recognised in modern times in the case of the zamīndārs or Dīwāns. But it also held good of the other classes. The recorded custom in Kori, Kargi and other *barhons* proves that the *Daos* succeeded one another by the rule of primogeniture; while as to *gaontias* the case is even clearer, for we have it on record that as late as 1867 the practice of succession by primogeniture was in their case almost ubiquitous.

[1] A fair parallel to this system is noticed in Hunter's Orissa, Vol. II, p. 268. 'The Hindu plan of managing the land-revenue passed to us intact, 'the Company simply stepping into the place of the Khurdhā family as Lord 'of the Domain. Under the Native régime the Prince or his Prime Minister 'administered it by means of ten great Fief-Holders (Qilādārs) each of whom 'had a definite area under his charge. Each of these ten Fiefs was sub-'divided into minor jurisdictions termed Forts (*Garhs*) and the lands of each 'Fort included a number of villages. The Prince or his Prime Minister 'received the revenue from the ten Holders *in capite* of Fiefs; the Fief-Hold-'ers collected it from the Heads of Forts within their respective jurisdic-'tions; the Heads of Forts gathered it from the various Heads of Villages, 'and the latter levied it from the Husbandmen.'

Secondly, each official in his degree was conceded a very wide discretion in administering his charge. This carried with it the power to appoint and dismiss his own subordinates resulting at once in the development of family influence and the reservation of numerous posts by the officer in whose gift they lay for the maintenance of the cadets of his family. The king himself set them the example. It was for him a natural course to provide for his relatives by the grant of a *chaurāsi*, and at least one instance of this is on record, showing that one Sarvadeva, a younger brother of Prithvīdeva I, obtained the *chaurāsi* of Sonthi 'as his share of the patrimony.' So too the holder of the *garh* found room for his relatives in the *barhons* of his estate, while the *Daos* in their turn had the individual villages within their gift. Even the *gaontia* would within his sphere have tenants' holdings to distribute. In many ways we may suppose that this system led to harmonious working between the different grades, and possibly it was deliberately encouraged for that reason. It is certainly remarkable that, even in the essential matter of revenue collection, the king should have made no attempt to deal direct with the village headman, and acquiesced in the mediation of *Dao* and Dīwān in spite of the wider field for misappropriation opened up by this protracted transmission. Lastly, there was the customary development of the perquisites of office—the collections made on every occasion public and private when a reasonable excuse arose for appealing to caste or religious feeling.

As a result of all this it became impossible that men who succeeded by inheritance to a lucrative official position and wide administrative powers, over a clearly defined area, much of which was held in subordinate capacities by creations of their family influence, should long continue to regard themselves as *merely* government officials. It is certain that long before the Haihaya power fell the *quondam* official had been converted into a hereditary occupant of a certain area with prescriptive rights at least as definite as

were his duties. Exactly how far their status had been defined by the close of the Rājput rule it is impossible to say. But it is curious that the one echo that we get of the position of affairs at that time preserves the record of the official status of the great landholders and at the same time indicates their possession of powers usually associated with a permanent title. For we read in Sir R. Jenkins Report of 1826 on the Nāgpur territories that all the evidence it was then possible to collect indicated that the great bulk of the kingdom was under the Haihaya kings partitioned among 'the members of the reigning family and the *officers*, civil and military, of the State, *who again partitioned it amongst their immediate dependants*.' A memory therefore of the official origin of every landholding tenure seems to have been preserved throughout the Rājput rule. But as the central authority grew weaker and weaker in the 17th and early 18th centuries we may be sure that the pretensions of the landholding officers grew stronger and stronger, leading the greatest of them in some cases to break out in open rebellion against their master. This was rendered possible not only by their personal family influence within their estate (if we may call it so), but by the remarkable fact that each of the Dīwāns, and indeed many of the *Daos* also, possessed fortified headquarters. That this was so in the latter years of Rājput rule may be inferred from the use of the term *Chhattīs Garh* which seems to have come into use about this time. Its significance is obvious. Each official must have possessed some sort of fighting force—more especially if (as is highly probable) the Dīwān was responsible not only for the revenue of his *chaurāsi* but also for the raising of the local militia in times of war. However this may be, it is certain that a wide divergence eventually arose between the theory and the practice of Haihaya administration, thus paving the way for further developments in Marāthā days, and for the general conferring of proprietary rights when the country passed to the hands of the British.

30. The reign of Kalyān Sahai marked the fullest development of the Haihaya power. He was succeeded by a number of kings whose uneventful reigns formed, it appears, a long period of stagnation and of gradual deterioration. We read in the Brahmanical histories of no incident of political importance during the last century and a half of Rājput rule, and its closing incidents can soon be told. Takhatsingh, who reigned about A.D. 1685, built a rude palace at Takhatpur (now in ruins) and a temple, and instituted the weekly market there which is still an important gathering. Rājsinghdeva, his son, ruled from A.D. 1689 to 1712 and built a new palace at the eastern limit of Ratanpur. He also excavated a large tank near by, ornamented it with masonry steps, and eventually gave his name to this portion of the town. But he is chiefly remembered for the intrigues which, in the absence of a direct heir, darkened the later years of his reign. It was generally understood that Mohansingh of the Raipur house had been selected to succeed him, and the king himself openly exhibited the greatest preference for this young man. But Rājsinghdeva's end was somewhat sudden being due to a fall from his horse. He sent for Mohansingh and also for his two grand-uncles Sardārsingh and Raghunāthsingh. There was much delay in Mohansingh's arrival as he was absent at the time on a shooting expedition. Meanwhile the Rājā was sinking fast, so he took the royal *pagrī* or turban and placed it on the head of Sardārsingh, thus acknowledging him as his successor. Mohansingh was greatly enraged at being thus superseded, and swore that he would yet regain his own—a threat which, as we shall see, he was able in later years to carry out. Sardārsingh however ruled quietly for 20 years and, having no son, was succeeded in A.D 1732 by his brother Raghunāthsingh, a man already over 60 and quite unable to encounter with a bold front the trials and difficulties which were shortly to overtake his country.

The close of the Haihaya rule.

Something of the condition of the country in the closing years of Rājput rule may be gathered from the analogy of the Rājput kingdoms described by Sir W. Sleeman in his 'Rambles and Recollections' 70 years ago. The intrigues of succession, the rebellions and assassinations recorded by him in his account of Orchha or Gwalior are echoed closely in the traditions of Ratanpur. Sleeman tells for example of the precarious positions of the king's high ministers[1] in Orchha. In Ratanpur more than 100 years before he wrote the story goes that Rājsinghdeva, whose reign has just been mentioned, had no son, and to divert the succession from his nearest heir he, on his minister's advice, permitted his favourite Rānī to be visited by a Brāhman. A son named Bishwanāth Singh was born, and later grew up and married a daughter of the king of Rewah. But the secret of Bishwanāth's birth at last leaked out, and in his fury the Rājā destroyed with cannon the entire quarter of Ratanpur in which his minister lived, involving the whole of the latter's family and adherents, numbering some 400 souls, in the common ruin. Bishwanāth committed suicide. Again in the Rājput kingdoms of Mālwā and Central India, we read that the local chiefs were 'continually fighting against each other 'or against the peasantry or even against the paramount 'power itself, and that paramount power or its delegates often 'found that the easiest way to crush one of these refractory 'vassals was to put him to "the ban of the Empire" and 'offer his lands, his castles, and his wealth to the victor.'[2] This again, allowing for the predominance of aboriginals and the consequent weakness of the clan and mildness of the military spirit, cannot be far wrong as a description also of 17th century Chhattīsgarh. The scores of petty forts scattered throughout the open country are eloquent testimony to the incessant feuds and petty raids which formed, as the central power weakened, the annual business of each official

[1] Volume I, Chapter XXIII.

[2] Sleeman, Volume I, page 177.

chief after the winter crops were harvested; while of such 'vassals' put to the 'ban of the Empire' examples are found in Haihaya history in the stories of Dāma Dhurwā, a Gond of Kosgain, and of the former Lodhi rulers of Kāmthi. These defied the kings of Ratanpur and were themselves slain and their estates appropriated by the ancestors of the present zamīndārs respectively of Chhuri and Pandaria. But while the temper of the kings of Ratanpur was no doubt as warlike as that of their kinsmen to the north, the country they held did not offer the same attractions to their needy clansmen. Even in Sleeman's time Chhattīsgarh was 'a fearful country though the cheapest and most fertile in India,' and cannibalism and human sacrifice were numbered among the horrible practices attributed to its people. It was probably therefore a superstitious aversion to wild forest country, and the dread of witchcraft for which Chhattīsgarh was always famous, which, as much as anything, deterred the military castes of Baghelkhand from emigrating in any great numbers to the more southern Kshatriya kingdom. Local leaders, Gonds, Kawars and Binjhwārs, held throughout Haihaya history an important share of the forest country, and were even gradually admitted by their long association with a Rājput throne to a partial inclusion in the Kshatriya caste. But these, as a military force, were of little value, and, when the day of trial came, yielded a shameful acquiescence in a change of masters, in spite of centuries of association with the Haihayavansī throne.

The Marāthā conquest.

31. At the close of 1740, when Raghunāthsingh had been reigning for some eight years, occurred the invasion of Chhattīsgarh by the Marāthā General Bhāskar Pant. At this time Raghunāthsingh was bowed down with a heavy sorrow. He had lost his only son and had ceased for nearly a year to take any interest in government. A feeble man at best, but now worn out with years and afflicted in mind, he made no effort to defend his kingdom, but waited in the calmness of

despair till Bhāskar Pant had reached his capital. Even then there was no attempt at resistance. Bhāskar Pant brought his guns to play on the fort, and a part of the palace was soon in ruins. At this juncture one of the Rānīs mounted the parapet and exhibited a flag of truce. The gates were then opened and the invading army entered and took possession. In this inglorious manner ended the rule of the Haihayavansī dynasty, which, without a struggle, yielded up its heritage. No struggle however bitter could have altered results, but history almost requires that the last of a long line of Rājās should die sword in hand defending his country, and leave in the memory of posterity a noble example of patriotism and courage. If, at the time, the whole resources of Chhattīsgarh had been exercised by one central authority, the Marāthās might have encountered a really formidable opposition. But as it was, there was no central authority possessing any vigour. The Haihayas, as we have seen, merely stood at the head of a number of petty Rājās and official chiefs, each of whom was to a large extent independent, and among whom the whole country was divided. It was an essentially weak system, adapted only to an earlier stage of social development, and must have fallen long previously, had any well organised foreign invasion ever been attempted. When the Marāthās came, they marched through the whole country without any opposition, and demanded and obtained the allegiance of all the surrounding states. Bhāskar Pant having reduced Ratanpur left a small garrison in it and marched for Cuttack. A fine of a lakh of rupees is mentioned as having been imposed on the town, and all that remained in the treasury was appropriated. But immediately Bhāskar Pant had gone, Raghunāthsingh ousted his representative, a Gosain, and once more assumed the reins of government. His success was short-lived. Previous mention has been made of Mohansingh who left Ratanpur disgusted, when Sardārsingh succeeded Rājsinghdeva, threatening to return and assume the government. His efforts to raise a

party in his favour strong enough to create a local revolution proving fruitless, he left for Nāgpur and finally joined Raghujī I. He became a favourite with this prince, was made a Bhonsla, and accompanied Raghujī in his expedition against Bengal. In A.D. 1745, when Raghujī returned from Bengal, he heard of Raghunāthsingh's reassertion of authority. Crossing from Rewah to Ratanpur he deposed Raghunāthsingh for the second time, and installed Mohansingh as Rājā. Mohansingh seems to have ruled in Chhattīsgarh till A.D. 1758, when, after the death of Raghujī, the latter's younger son Bimbāji had the Chhattīsgarh country made over to him. No sooner did this intelligence reach Mohansingh than he prepared to oppose Bimbāji's progress. He was taken suddenly ill, however, and died at Raipur, where he had collected a force, and thus Bimbāji assumed the government without disturbance. Before dismissing the subject of the Haihayavansī dynasty, it may be noted that the only surviving representative of the family is a quiet simple-minded Rājput who lives in Bargaon in the Mahāsamund tahsīl of the Raipur District. He represents the junior or Raipur branch of the family, and holds five villages which were given him rent-free by the Marāthās for his maintenance. In the village Senduras (Balodā Bazār tahsīl) there is a mālguzār who claims descent from the Ratanpur family, but it is believed that this line is extinct, and the claim of the Senduras mālguzār is questionable. He enjoys no privileges such as those of the Bargaon Thākur, to whom presents are still made when he visits the chiefs who were once subordinate to his ancient house.

Bimbāji Bhonsla.

32. Bimbāji Bhonsla ruled at Ratanpur from A.D. 1758 till his death in A.D 1787. Though generally regarded as subordinate to the head of the family at Nāgpur, he was virtually independent. Alluding to the relations existing between the Bhonsla brothers Sir R. Jenkins states that the eldest as Rājā, or sovereign, had a right to the allegiance of the others, and to

certain military services on account of their fiefs or appanages. But the latter managed their country and maintained their separate courts, households, ministers and armies, subject to no interference whatever on the part of the Rājā. This then was the position of Bimbāji. He stepped into the place of the old Rājās of Chhattīsgarh, maintained a regular court at Ratanpur, and surrounded himself with a considerable Marāthā following, by whose assistance he maintained his authority. In the earlier years of his reign he was very oppressive, but as time passed on, he more and more identified himself with his people, and has left a memory fairly popular and respected. He was succeeded (A.D. 1788) by Vyankoji, a younger brother of Rājā Raghujī II of Nāgpur. Vyankoji, though he paid two or three flying visits to Chhattīsgarh, and passed through it in 1811 to Benāres where he died, never took an active part in the government of the province being too much concerned with the more important politics of Nāgpur. A Sūbah was posted to Ratanpur on his behalf. Anandi Bai, one of the widows of Bimbāji, forcibly opposed the Sūbah ordered by Vyankoji to assume the government after the death of Bimbāji. But a compromise was soon effected. It was decided that the government should be carried on in the name of Vyankoji, who should be represented by a Sūbah on the spot, but that Anandi Bai should be consulted in the details of the government. As a matter of fact her authority seems to have been very limited, and practically from 1787 to 1818 A.D. when Appa Sāhib was deposed, and the administration of the Nāgpur country during the minority of the last Raghujī was assumed by the British Government, the Chhattīsgarh province was ruled by a succession of Sūbahs who exercised in all departments a very extensive authority.

Sūbah government.

1. Vithal Dinkar.
2. Kāru Pant.
3. Keshava Pant.
4. Bhīka Bhau.
5. Sakhārām Bāpu.
6. Yādava Rao Diwākar.

33. A list of the Ratanpur Sūbahs who immediately preceded the arrival of the first British Superintendent is given in the margin. They were subject to very little, if any, control, and as long as they were supported by the central power at Nāgpur, the majority of them were very unscrupulous as to the means used in the pursuit of wealth. They were almost driven to this course by the knowledge that their authority would certainly be short-lived, and that they would be superseded before long by some new favourite. The tradition still survives of this early Sūbah government, as a period when a system of universal 'loot' was a recognised State policy. One of the last of the Sūbahs, Sakhārām Bāpu, was shot by a resident of Ratanpur. He had under false pretences promised to raise the man to a position of independence and dignity as a large landed proprietor and thus deliberately robbed him of a considerable fortune.

The Marāthā administration.

34. The Marāthā administration proper thus lasted for barely 60 years (1758 to 1818) and the following account may be given of its methods. Sir R. Jenkins tells us that 'the changes effected by the Marāthās did not extend 'further than establishing a more regular mode of keeping 'the accounts, no alteration having taken place in the 'manner of assessing the lands, nor any measures being 'devised to regulate and record the agreements made between 'the patels and cultivators.' It is evident from this that the Marāthā simply adopted the old Haihaya system to his new requirements—making the least change possible in existing methods. But the spirit of the new rule was wholly different. There was no more the old respect for customary rights, and none of the easy going delegation of authority so natural to rulers whose position was based

[1] Report of 1827, page 92, of 1901 issue.

on the tacit approval of the people. The Marāthā had no love for the old official hierarchy, for they and their methods were a serious hindrance to his one object in coming to the country, *viz.*, the collection of as large a revenue as possible. Hence in all but the forest country, where it was thought best to leave matters as they stood—control being difficult and revenue small—the old Dīwāns, and with them the great majority of the *Daos* also, were roughly set aside. The *garhs* were called parganas and were entrusted to Kamaish-dārs. The *barhons* were designated tāluks and were given to patels. The *gaontias*, who could not be replaced, were left as they were but suffered as much as any from the change of masters. A list of the parganas of the open country as maintained by the Marāthās north of the Seonāth is preserved in an old letter of 1855, and may be quoted here:—

Name of pargana.	No. of villages.	
1. Ratanpur ...	485	Later formed the Ratanpur pargana of 925 villages.
2. Balodā ...	67	
3. Takhatpur ...	173	
4. Bijaipur ...	91	
5. Lormi ...	109	
6. Kharaud ...	158	Later formed the Kharaud pargana of 449 villages.
7. Akaltarā ...	93	
8. Kokrā ...	10	
9. Nawāgarh ...	53	
10. Jānjgir ...	31	
11. Kekirdā ...	104	
12. Nawāgarh ...	37	Later formed the Nawāgarh pargana of 872 villages.
13. Mungelī ...	159	
14. Madanpur ...	23	
15. Badnerā ...	11	
16. Patharia ...	36	
17. Rākah ...	119	
18. Māro ...	153	

Ten of these parganas, it will be noticed, bear the names of Haihaya *chaurāsis*, (see para. 28 above)—and it seems highly probable, seeing what few changes the Marāthās introduced, that with slight alterations these accurately represent the *garhs* as they existed in the open country in the last days of Rājput rule. They continued apparently unaltered until 1818 when, as noted in the list, they were compressed into the three parganas of Ratanpur, Kharaud and Nawāgarh under the orders of the first British Superintendent of Chhattīsgarh. From these three parganas the present tahsīls of Bilāspur, Jānjgir (formerly Seorīnarāyan) and Mungelī are lineally descended.

This period (1758 to 1818) is usually regarded as the 'dark age' of Chhattīsgarh history. The old Hindu system had been swept away and an alien government had taken its place. In the time of its ancient Rājās who were bound to the people by ties of tradition and sympathy, there was, it has been said, 'an extent of peace, comfort, and happiness sadly in 'contrast with the evil days which followed the wave of 'Marāthā conquest. Here was an irruption of soldiers flushed 'with victory among a people, whose past history had been 'singularly free "from war and rumours of wars" thus creating 'a community markedly timid and unwarlike. As a natural 'result they were trodden down unmercifully and their country 'robbed and desolated. To realise what the country must 'have suffered between A.D. 1740 and 1818, we have to 'remember that not only was a considerable Marāthā force 'permanently maintained in Chhattīsgarh, but that large 'armies were often traversing the country, not only living on 'the people, but freely robbing them. Then there were the 'raids of the Pindāris, whose depredations were connived at 'by the Bhonsla Government and from whom a regular black-'mail was accepted by the Rājā or his officials out of the 'booty acquired in pillaging the people. Add to all this the 'exactions and oppressions of the Marāthā Sūbahs already 'referred to, who exercised the chief civil authority and we

'need not be surprised that during the half century which 'immediately preceded the British Regency the country 'materially retrograded, and tracts relapsed into waste which 'had formerly been reclaimed and cultivated.'[1] At the same time that a certain measure of rude plenty was still maintained under Marāthā rule may safely be inferred from the following description of Chhattīsgarh written by an eye-witness—one of the first Europeans perhaps who ever visited the country. It is an extract from the diary of Captain Blunt written in 1795 A.D. descriptive of his journey through Chhattīsgarh to Rājahmundry and is of sufficient interest to be given here *verbatim*. Having crossed from Rewah through Kauria and Mātin to Ratanpur he writes as follows:—

'March 18th. Having now rested five days at *Ruttun-'pour*, our journey was renewed, with fresh spirits, through 'a champaign country, abundantly watered with little rivers, 'full of villages, and beautifully ornamented with groves and 'tanks. After the difficulties we had encountered, the 'change of scene was truly gratifying, and the Mahratta 'government being well established, and the country highly 'cultivated, we met with civil treatment, and abundance of 'every species of grain. These were comforts to which we 'had been so long unaccustomed, that the hardships we had 'suffered in traversing the mountains and wilds of *Corair*, '*Kurgummah*, and *Mahtin* were soon forgot. But as an 'account of each day's journey, through this fertile country, 'would be tedious and uninteresting in the detail, I need 'only mention that we travelled 100 miles through it in little 'more than thirteen days, which brought us on the 31st of 'March to *Ryepour*, the next principal town in *Choteesgur*; 'but which, from its population, and commerce, might justly 'be ranked the first. I computed about 3000 huts in it: there 'is also a large stone fort on the north-east side of the 'town, the walls of which are decayed, but the ditch is deep 'and wide.

[1] Chisholm's Settlement Report, 1868.

'The soil in this country is a rich black mould, but 'no-where more than three feet in depth. Under this the 'solid rock appears, as was perceptible in all the beds of the 'rivers, and in the sides of tanks and wells. It produces large 'quantities of wheat, and vegetable oil, such as the linseed 'and Palmachristi, and various kinds of pulse. Rice is not 'abundant, it being only cultivated behind large reservoirs 'of water, collected in the rainy season, in situations where 'the declivity of the surface is suitable; and through the 'dykes, or embankments of which, the water is occasionally 'let out to supply the vegetation, when the fall of rain from 'the atmosphere no longer favours it. Large quantities of 'grain are exported from *Choteesgur* all over the *Nizam's* '*dominions*, and even to the *Circars*, when the scarcity in 'those provinces requires it. From the latter they import 'salt, which is retailed at such an extravagant price, that it 'is sometimes sold for its weight in silver. The villages 'are very numerous, but poor; and the country abounds in 'cattle, and brood mares of the *taloo* species. The popula- 'tion of *Choteesgur* is not great, nor does the system of 'government to which it is subject at all tend to increase it. 'The *Subah* of *Choteesgur*, with its dependencies, was at this 'time rented by the Berar government, to Ittul Pundit, for 'a specific sum, which was payable annually in *Nagpour;* 'and who, in consideration of the rank of *Subadar*, and his 'appointment, had likewise paid a considerable sum. Upon 'further inquiry as to the means by which the *Subadar* 'managed the country, I was informed, that he farmed 'different portions of it to his tenants,[1] for a certain period 'and for specific sums; nearly upon the same terms as the 'whole was rented to him. The revenue is collected by his 'tenantry, which, in those parts of the country where the 'government is well established, gives them little trouble. 'The attention of the *Subadar* is chiefly directed to levying 'tributes from the *Zameendars* in the mountainous parts of

[1] *i.e.*, the Patels.

'the country; who being always refractory and never paying 'anything until much time has been spent in warfare, the 'result is often precarious, and the tribute consequently 'trivial. I was next led to inquire what method was adopted 'by the tenantry in collecting the revenue from the 'peasants. They informed me that it invariably consisted 'in taxing the ploughs, and was always delivered in the 'produce of the lands; as grain, oil, or cotton, according to 'the species of cultivation for which the implements had 'been used. This consequently occasions a vast accumula-'tion of the produce of the country to the tenant; and some 'expedient becomes immediately necessary to convert it into 'specie to enable him to pay his rent.

'The *Mahrattas* keep their peasantry in the most abject 'state of dependance, by which means they allege, the '*Ryats* are less liable to be turbulent, or offensive to the 'government. Coin is but sparingly circulated among them, 'and they derive their habitations, and subsistence, from 'the labour of their own hands. Their troops, who are 'chiefly composed of emigrants, from the northern and 'western parts of *Hindoostan*, are quartered upon the ten-'antry, who, in return for the accommodation and subsistence 'they afford them, require their assistance, whenever it may 'be necessary, for collecting the revenues. Such was the 'state of the country and government of *Choteesgur;* the 'exports of which, in seasons of plenty, are said to employ '100,000 bullocks; and it is accordingly one of the most 'productive provinces under the *Berah Rajah.*'

British Protectorate.

35. It was in supersession of a government such as that described that in A.D. 1818, after a short period of disturbance consequent upon Appa Sāhib's escape and flight, the country came for he first time under the superintendence of British Officers. The change would in any case have been for the better but, as it happened, the chief authority in Chhattīsgarh was entrusted to Colonel Agnew, an officer whose special qualifi-

cations were such as to win the respect and esteem of the whole community. It was he (after the death of Mr. Edmonds, who had first taken charge of the District), who removed the headquarters of Chhattīsgarh from Ratanpur to Raipur, as being a more important and central position, and from that time Ratanpur has ceased to be of any administrative importance. It is unnecessary to go in detail into the measures taken by Colonel Agnew to improve the condition of Chhattīsgarh. Sir R. Jenkins' Report gives us full information on this subject and the following quotations from it will suffice:—' The Khālsa lands[1] which were distributed ' formerly into 27 divisions were formed into 9 Parganahs ' by Colonel Agnew. The revenue of the province seems ' to have been on the increase from the time it first came ' into the hands of the Maharathas, but during the later ' years of the life of Venkoji Bhonsla, and the time of Appa ' Sāhib, who succeeded to the appanage on the death of ' his father in 1222 Fasli, exaction was carried to a most ' unprincipled and ruinous extent. In the course of 18 ' years, from 1209 to 1227 Fasli, the assessment was ' raised from one lakh and twenty-six thousand to three ' lakhs and eighty-three thousand rupees. The system ' of imposing *pattis* (extra percentage enhancements) was ' carried to the utmost limit, and Colonel Agnew describes ' the sūbah, in 1819, as presenting " one uniform scene of ' plunder and oppression, uninfluenced by any consideration ' but that of collecting, by whatever means, the largest ' amount possible."

' On assuming charge Colonel Agnew's attention was ' easily directed to introducing order and regularity into the ' system we found established, or rather to reorganizing it. ' With this view, the following general measures were ' adopted by him.

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[1] For Colonel Agnew's treatment of the zamīndārs see the separate notice on these estates in the Appendix.

'The *pattis* of latest introduction, which could be considered as forming no part of the regular assessment, were abolished. The payments of the *kists* (instalments) were fixed at periods favourable to the interests of the ryots and receipts were directed to be given to the gaontias on each payment.

'Colonel Agnew experienced great difficulty in settling the balance due on our taking charge, and fixing the assessment of the year 1228 Fasli.

'The total amount of the arrears of the Khālsa lands borne on the accounts was one lakh seventy-seven thousand six hundred and eight rupees; but on investigation it was found that the greater portion of the sum was the accumulation in the Mahratta accounts of bad debts and unrealized revenue, to enforce the payment of which would have been impracticable and to attempt it unjust; accordingly one lakh thirty-four thousand five hundred and ninety-nine rupees was at once remitted; thirty-six thousand five hundred rupees ordered to be collected, and the remainder retained as a doubtful balance. . . . .

'The migrating habits of the people and the general poverty of the gaontias has hitherto prevented the settlements in this district from being concluded for more than one year.

'No very satisfactory account of the land revenue of former years can be given; but from the best sources, the average collections for the ten years previous to 1228 may be stated at three lakhs sixty thousand five hundred and ninety-eight rupees.

'Our collections have been—

			Rs.
In 1228	...	...	3,31,470
1229	...	...	3,47,590
1230	...	...	3,80,826
1231	...	...	4,04,797
1232	...	...	4,18,007
1233	...	...	4,03,424
1234	...	...	3,85,840'

Restoration of Native Rule.

36. The British protectorate continued from A.D. 1818 till 1830, and during the greater portion of this period Colonel Agnew continued as Superintendent. From A.D. 1830 till 1854 the country remained under native administration. The revenue system seems to have been much the same as during the British protectorate, the post of Superintendent being occupied by Marāthā Sūbahs. These resided at Raipur, and subordinate to them were the Kamaishdārs or sub-collectors in each pargana or cluster of tāluks. The time had passed when violence and oppression could be freely resorted to by those in power, for protests against the action of the local Sūbahdārs, if thrown out by the Rājā himself, were almost invariably carried to the British Resident at Nāgpur, whose simple edict was usually sufficient to redress any glaring wrongs. Judging by the tone of the people in speaking of these days they seem to have been fairly contented and prosperous; and although there were doubtless many individual sufferers from occasional acts of injustice on the part of native officials, yet such cases are not entirely unknown even under more civilised systems. In this District the people were very remote from the central authority, they were not inundated by a swarm of unprincipled subordinates, and so little was really known of them and their country that in practice the masses were hardly interfered with at all. On the whole the interval of native government, as controlled by the British Resident, seems to have been a period of slow but steady progress.

Commencement of British Rule.

37. On the lapse of the Nāgpur Province to the British Government in 1854, Chhattīsgarh was formed into a separate Deputy Commissionership with its headquarters at Raipur. But after some years' experience the charge was found too heavy for one officer, and in 1861 Bilāspur was constituted a distinct District, thus coming under the routine of British administration of which a separate account is given

in Chapter IX. The country remained wholly undisturbed throughout the Mutiny of 1857-58. From that time onwards the history of the District is mainly the story of its social development. Undisturbed by political unrest, the people have devoted themselves to their material advancement. They are still somewhat backward and unintelligent in so far as the purer Hindu element is outnumbered by the aboriginal and low-caste population. But it has been an era of rapid improvement. The gift of proprietary rights at the first settlement of 1868 created throughout the District a new social centre of gravity. In old days the head of the village was the mouthpiece of the tenantry and practically one of them—their natural defender against exactions on the part of government. Under our rule the headman and tenants have independent legal rights while the government stands by to control the relations between them. The easy going headmen of earlier days related by blood, by marriage or by caste to every tenant holding from him; the village itself a miniature republic, internally discordant perhaps but always united in opposition to outside control; and a village community self-contained not only in the matter of its own support but in the power to settle disputes among its members; these are features which grow less familiar every year. In their place we find a more and more business-like control by the landlord; a growing spirit of independence among the tenant class; and in consequence a reference of every matter in dispute to the tahsīl or District headquarters. The new picture is in some respects perhaps not so pleasing as the old, but it is at any rate more stimulating and fraught with greater possibilities for the future. Add to this the development in wealth, the improvement in dress, and the increasing comforts of daily life, and we have ample evidence that internal peace and material prosperity have already inspired even this backward country with the new spirit of progress. The half centenary of Crown rule which we only commemorated a year ago can always claim to have been a period of honest

and sustained effort on behalf of the people which, even if it cease to-morrow, will have had a permanent influence upon their character and their ideals.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

38. Bilāspur is an important District from an archæological point of view. It possesses many beautiful specimens of mediæval architecture in the temples of Pāli, Jānjgir, and Tumān and in those of Kharod, Dhanpur and Mallār. Temples of similar type but not so richly ornate as these may be seen in Seorīnarāyan and Adbhār, while ruins at Gatorā, Kotgarh, Kosgain, Manipur, Mahāmadpur, Bisesrā and Kothāri show that many other structures of the kind have fallen into decay. Ratanpur also possesses some decorated temples, but the bulk of them belong to a late period distinctly influenced by the Muhammadan style. Most of the buildings here mentioned were built by the Haihaya kings who first settled at Tumān and afterwards moved down to Ratanpur. Hence a large number are Sivite shrines, for the Haihayas were Siva worshippers as their inscriptions show. Among Vishnuite temples the best known are the beautiful unfinished temple of Jānjgir and the principal temple of Seorīnarāyan. At Mallār, Dhanpur, Ratanpur and elsewhere there are many Jain remains, the statues at Mallār being colossal.

Architectural remains.

There are two masonry hill forts, one at Lāphagarh, the other at Kosgain to which access is very difficult. Large earth fortifications are found in the plain country at Rāmgarh, Kotmi, Kotgarh, Mallār, Sarhar, Kāshigarh and Konārgarh. Ratanpur and Bilāspur contain forts made with stone and lime. The Ratanpur fort is built so as roughly to resemble a seated elephant. At Korbā there are two small caves cut out of rock.

39. A number of inscriptions have been found in this District almost all of which refer to the Haihaya kings of Ratanpur. Among

Inscriptions.

these still remaining *in situ* are two inscriptions in the Kharod temple,[1] two in the Seorīnarāyan[2] temple, some small inscriptions on the walls of the Pāli temple and in the Kosgain fort[3], and one in Kotgarh which has not been deciphered. A second Kotgarh inscription has been removed to Akaltarā.[4] There are two small inscriptions in the Mahāmaya temple of Ratanpur, one praising the ruling king and the other the sculptor. Several important records have been removed to the Raipur and Nāgpur Museums. The former contains an inscription brought from Kotgarh[5] and the latter four from Ratanpur,[6] one from Mallār,[7] and one from Kosgain. A second inscription from Mallār is kept in the Bilāspur Town Hall[8]; another from Mahāmadpur[9] still lies in a bungalow in the civil station.

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[1] Indian Antiquary XXII, page 82, and Cousens' Report for 1904, page 53.

[2] Cousens' Report for 1904, page 53.

[3] Cunningham's Archæological Report, Vol. XIII, page 153, *et seq.*

[4] Cousens' Report for 1904, page 51.

[5] Indian Antiquary, Vol. XX, page 84.

[6] Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, pages 34 and 45, and Cunningham's Archæological Survey of India, Vol. XVII, plate XX.

[7] Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, page 39.

[8] Cousens' Report, 1904, page 50.

[9] Indian Antiquary, Vol. XX, page 84.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

RUINED TEMPLE, KHAROD.

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION.

STATISTICS OF POPULATION.

Recent changes in the constitution of the District.

40. The area and population of the District in 1901 were 8341 square miles and 1,012,972 persons respectively. Both the Raipur and Bilāspur Districts, which at that time together covered an area of 20,000 square miles and contained a population of 2½ million persons, were considered to be too large for efficient management, and in 1902 proposals were drawn up by Mr. L. S. Carey, the Commissioner, for the constitution of a third District, comprising the western portions of Raipur and Bilāspur. The Drug District was formed in January 1906 and an extensive redistribution of territory took place. The western part of the Mungelī tahsīl, comprised in the Nawāgarh and Māro Revenue Inspectors' circles, was transferred to the Drug District, this tract having an area of 363 square miles with a population of 83,650 persons. At the same time the Tarengā estate lying west of the Seonāth and the tracts south of the Mahānadi comprising the Sonākhān and Sarsiwā tracts, and the Bhatgaon and Bilaigarh-Katgi zamīndāris were transferred from Bilāspur to Raipur. This area amounted to 706 square miles and contained 99,402 persons. The line of the Seonāth and Mahānadi rivers thus became the boundary between Raipur and Bilāspur. In 1905, however, on the cession of Sambalpur to Bengal, the Chandarpur-Padampur and Mālkharodā estates from that District were made over to Bilāspur and attached to the Jānjgir tahsīl. The revised area of the District is thus 7602 square miles[1] and its population 917,240 persons.

[1] A discrepancy of three square miles is due to the correction of forest area in 1902.

Bilāspur now ranks third in area and second in population among the Districts of the Central Provinces and Berār.

Changes in tahsīl areas.

41. The District is divided into three tahsīls, Mungelī lying to the west, Bilāspur in the centre, and Jānjgir to the east. The area and population of the tahsīls in 1901 is shown below :—

	Area in square miles.	Population.
Bilāspur	5080	472,682
Mungelī	1794	255,055
Jānjgir	1467	285,236

In 1905 the Chandarpur-Padampur and Mālkharodā estates were attached to the Jāngir tahsīl, which was afterwards relieved of the strip south of the Mahānadi. At the same time the Korbā, Chhurī and Uprorā zamīndāris having an area of 1643 square miles with a population of 86,917 persons were transferred from the Bilāspur tahsīl to Jānjgir. The Balodā-Pantorā tract to the east of the Līlāgar river containing 48 villages with an area of 79 square miles and a population of 18,065 persons was transferred from Bilāspur to Jānjgir tahsīl. The line of the Līlāgar river thus became the boundary between the tahsīls. A small area of 23 villages of the Bilāspur tahsīl to the west of the Maniāri, having an area of 20 square miles with a population of 5712 persons, was also transferred to the Mungelī tahsīl so as to make the Maniāri river the boundary of the two tahsīls. These changes took place on 1st January 1906.

The area and population of the reconstituted tahsīls is shown on the next page.

	Area in square miles.	Population.
Bilāspur	3111	321,915
Mungelī	1452	177,116
Jānjgir	3039	418,209

Density.

42. Bilāspur is thus the largest tahsīl in point of area and Jānjgir in population, while Mungelī is the smallest in both respects. The total density of population is 121 persons per square mile as against 120 for British Districts of the Central Provinces and Berār. The figures of density for the tahsīls are Jānjgir 138; Mungelī 122; Bilāspur 103. But if the zamīndāris be excluded the mālguzāri area of Bilāspur contains 202 persons to the square mile and Jānjgir 228 persons; while the seven northern zamīndāris, now divided between the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls, covering an area of 3619 square miles, have a density of only 50 persons. In Mungelī tahsīl the density of the mālguzāri area is 131 persons as against 101 in Pandaria zamīndāri and 188 in Kantelī.

Towns and villages.

43. The District has three towns and 3245 inhabited and 202 uninhabited villages. The population of the towns in 1901 was—Bilāspur 18,937; Mungelī 5907; Ratanpur 5479. The total urban population is 30,000 persons or just over three per cent. of that of the District, this proportion being smaller than that of any District except Mandlā and Drug. Since 1881 the urban population has increased by 12,000 persons or 67 per cent. The population of Bilāspur has nearly quadrupled since 1872. Ratanpur had a larger population in 1891 than at any other census. Mungelī is really only a large village, with little or nothing of an urban

character about it. In 1901 the three towns contained 3095 Muhammadans and 719 Christians. Besides the towns the District has 14 villages with a population of 2000 or more persons. These are Chāmpa (4315), Pandaria (3322), Bamnidīh (2746), Takhatpur (2616), Balodā (2603), Pendrā (2457), Salkhan (2387), Ganiāri (2353), Jānjgir (2257), Chhuri (2141), Akaltarā (2139), Nawāgarh (2054), Ghutkū (2034), and Mallār (2010).

Seventy-two villages or more than two per cent. of the total contain between 1000 and 2000 persons, while 776 inhabited villages contain less than 100 persons or 20 houses.

Movement of population.

44. A census of the District has now been taken on five occasions, but the emunerations of 1866 and 1872 were altogether inaccurate. In 1881 the population was returned at 1,017,327 persons, and showed an increase of 42 per cent. on that of 1872, though the registered excess of births over deaths was only 9 per cent. The area of the District was taken as 7798 square miles at this census. At the first two enumerations the District had been taken to include the Feudatory States of Saktī and Kawardhā. In 1891 the population was 1,164,158 persons, showing an increase of 14½ per cent. on that of 1881 as against the average of 9½ per cent. for British Districts. The increase from the excess of births over deaths was 11 per cent. and a part of the rise at the census must be attributed to more accurate enumeration in the northern zamīndāris, where the increase was 37 per cent. At this census the area of the District increased to 8341 square miles, due to correction in survey.

Between 1881 and 1891 both the birth and death rates were considerably below the Provincial average, but this may perhaps be attributed to deficient reporting. In 1901 the population was 1,012,972 persons, showing a decrease of 151,168 or 13 per cent. on that of 1891 as against an average of 8½ per cent. for British Districts. The

Mungelī tahsīl suffered most severely, losing 24 per cent. of its population as against 10 per cent. in Bilāspur and 11 in Jānjgir. The northern zamīndāris scarcely showed any decline in population. Only some were severely affected in 1897, and none in 1900. Over the whole District the number of deaths exceeded that of births in 1892, 1896, 1897 and 1900. The reported excess of deaths over births was only 19,000 or 106,000 less than the decrease in population disclosed by the census. A considerable amount of emigration took place, and the number of persons who went to Assam during the decade was estimated at 33,000, but a large part of the difference must be attributed to the deficient reporting of deaths in the famine years. The part which suffered most severely was the black-soil area of the Mungelī tahsīl, lying beneath the Maikal range. This tract including also the north of the old Drug tahsīl and the Khairāgarh and Nāndgaon States experienced a succession of bad harvests, whose severity was only exceeded in the Vindhyan Districts of Saugor and Damoh.

In the reconstituted District the decrease in population during 1891—1901 was 12 per cent. or nearly 7 per cent. in Bilāspur, more than 7 per cent. in Jānjgir and 29 per cent. in Mungelī.

During the years 1901 to 1906 the average reported excess of births over deaths was about 21 per mille, which on the census population of the reconstituted District would give an increase of 19,102 persons or 2 per cent. since 1901.

Migration.

45. Just over 92 per cent. of the population were shown in 1901 as having been born within the District, this proportion being the highest in the Province with the exception of Raipur, Betūl and Bhandāra. Migration takes place to and from all the adjoining Districts and States, but it may be noted that in 1901 the District had 13,000 immigrants from Central India and 7500 from the United Provinces.

Cholera.

46. The following notice of diseases is based principally on a note supplied by Captain T. G. Stokes, I.M.S., formerly Civil Surgeon of the District. Malaria, cholera and small-pox are all severe scourges. In the 36 years between 1870 and 1906 there were severe epidemics of cholera in eleven years. In six of these years more than 6000 deaths occurred from the disease, and in 1896 the total was 9000, or equivalent to a rate of 11 per mille on the population. During the last few seasons it has been less virulent. Cholera has in past years generally originated from the passage of pilgrims returning from the shrine of Jagannāth in Orissa, many of whom being in indigent circumstances and weary with the day's travel would eat bad or uncooked food and rapidly develop disease. Twenty years ago the number of sick and dead pilgrims to be seen along the Seorīnarāyan road was sometimes appalling. In the hot weather, Captain Stokes writes, it is common to find the village entirely dependent for its water-supply on a stagnant pool which the cultivators share with their cattle. The water is frequently disgustingly foul and aerated by bubbles of gas arising from decaying vegetation beneath. When cholera breaks out in a village, communications with adjoining villages are stopped, and when one or two deaths have occurred all the people leave their houses and camp out in the fields or forest. This system of self-quarantine is frequently followed by excellent results and would also be an efficacious remedy against the spread of plague. Mr. Purshottam Dās, Settlement Officer, relates that during his stay in Bilāspur he had seen several cases of parents deserting their children when attacked by cholera; they put no reliance in medicine, and believing that the disease is caused by the wrath of the goddess, consider it useless to interfere between her and her victims.

Small-pox and plague.

47. Small-pox is always more or less prevalent, but never has the depopulating effect of cholera. In the thirty years between

1870 and 1906 there was none in which some deaths were not recorded, the highest mortality being in 1889 when more than 4000 deaths were recorded or at the rate of 5½ per mille of population. The disease appears to become most virulent towards the close of the cold weather. Plague first appeared in 1904 in Bilāspur town, and a number of deaths also occurred in Mungelī and at Gaurelā in Pendrā. Its progress was checked by inoculation and evacuation, and later by the wholesale destruction of rats. The people readily leave their houses on the first appearance of the disease, and since 1904 when the deaths totalled about 400 no serious outbreak has again occurred.

Other diseases.

48. Bowel complaints [1] become frequent on the setting-in of the rains, when the people are the subjects of considerable abdominal congestion. The mortality is not usually severe, however, except in famine years. Malaria usually accounts for about half the total mortality according to the returns of vital statistics, but all kinds of fever are included under this term. Very severe cases of malarial cachexia come from the northern zamīndāris where the jungle is densest. The commonest form appears to be benign tertian ague.

Blindness is very common and of many forms. It is probably due partly to the ulceration of the cornea during severe illnesses, and partly to conjunctivitis brought on by smoky houses and dirt. In 1901 the number of such cases was 17 per 10,000 of population, women being to men as 10 to 7.

Leprosy is also fairly common, the proportion of lepers being 6·7 per 10,000 of population in 1901 or the fifth highest in the Province. Males were to females in the proportion of four to three. The disease is prevalent among the lower classes and is chiefly of the tubercular form. The District has two leper asylums at Mungelī and Chāmpa maintained by missionary bodies with the assistance of small allowances from Government.

[1] The remainder of the notice of diseases is taken *verbatim* from Captain Stokes' report.

The disease of syphilis is widely prevalent in the District, especially among the low castes. It is attributed to dirty habits combined with the lax morality of the people. The awful disfigurements produced by advanced syphilis may be seen every day on the roads and in the bazars, and the hospitals teem with cases in every stage of development. The affection is hardly regarded as a disgrace and patients speak of it to their friends without much reserve.

Skin diseases are also very common and are worst when the rainfall has been scanty and the hot weather supervenes with much dust.

Stone is a prevalent disease, but to a less degree than in Raipur. Elephantiasis is especially common in the water-logged town of Ratanpur. It generally appears in the lower extremities and people may be met daily round the town with the characteristic symptoms, but they seldom apply for treatment for this disease.

Occupation.

49. In 1901, as many as 84½ per cent. of the population were supported by pasture and agriculture, this proportion being about the highest in the Province. Even of the remaining population a considerable proportion are village artisans and menials, who are directly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. Only 1½ per cent. of the population are supported by household service, this being a smaller number than in any District except Mandlā and Betūl. About 22,000 persons or 2 per cent. of the total are supported by the cotton industry. About 4000 persons are en gaged in religious services and nearly 10,000 are beggars.

Language. Chhattīsgarhī.

50. The Chhattīsgarhī dialect of Eastern Hindī is the main vernacular of the District and is spoken by more than 90 per cent. of the population.[1] Eastern Hindī is the

[1] The following description of Chhattīsgarhī is taken from a note furnished by Dr. Grierson for the C. P. Census Report of 1901, and from the notice of Chhattīsgarhī in the Records of the Linguistic Survey (Vol. VI, Eastern Hindī).

language spoken in Oudh and the centre of the United Provinces, being bounded by Western Hindī on the west and Bihāri on the east. Three main dialects of this language are classified by Dr. Grierson—Awadhī, the dialect of Oudh, Baghelī, that of Baghelkhand or Pūrva, and Chhattīsgarhī. Awadhī and Baghelī are, however, practically identical and are only separated by him in deference to popular custom. Baghelī is spoken in the Central Provinces in Jubbulpore and Mandlā, and Dr. Grierson considers that the Eastern Hindī of Chhattīsgarh found its way through Jubbulpore and Mandlā, being introduced by the Aryans who originally settled there. It is probable that the Hindu immigration which led to the foundation of the Haihayavansī dynasty of Ratanpur took this route. Thenceforth owing to its geographical isolation the dialect developed its peculiarities. It does not differ so much from the Baghelī dialect as is commonly supposed, and Dr. Grierson is of opinion that if a Chhattīsgarhī speaker was set down in Oudh he would find himself at home with the language of the locality in a week. The termination of the past tense in *is*, as *kahis*, he said, *māris*, he struck, which is what everybody notices in Chhattīsgarhī, is pre-eminently the typical shibboleth of a speaker of Eastern Hindī and is commonly heard in Calcutta from servants belonging to Oudh. It is interesting to note that these words are really the relics of a passive formation, the correct word being *mār-y-as*, which means it was struck by him. The use of *o* for the genitive of the personal pronouns as *mor*, *tor*, my, thy, also belongs to all the Eastern Hindī dialects, as also the past tense *bhave*, was, and the use of *rahanā* for the past imperfect, *dekhat raheun*, I was seeing. Peculiarities of Chhattīsgarhī noted by Dr. Grierson are the formation of the plural in *man*, as *laikāman*, boys, the instrumental in *an* as *bhūkhan*, by hunger, and the addition of *har* to a noun to give definition as *gar-har*, the neck. This last belongs also to the Bihāri of Chutia Nāgpur. To indicate the plural *sab*, *sabo*, *sabbo*, *jamā*, or *jammā* may be prefixed

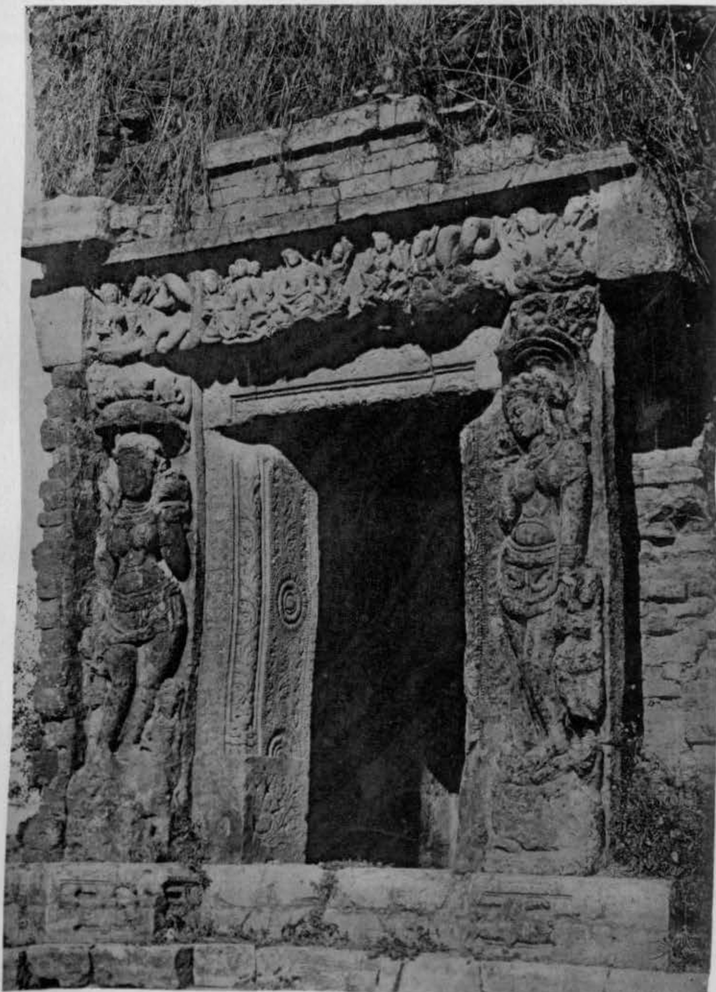
with or without *man;* thus *jammā puto-man* the daughters-in-law. An old form of the plural ends in *an*, thus *bailā* a bullock, plural *bailan*. In declension the following post-positions are added to the noun which remains unchanged; *kā*, to (also denotes accusative); *lā*, for (also denotes accusative); *bar*, for; *le*, *se*, by, from; *ke*, of; *mā*, in. The *ke* of the genitive does not change; example *laikā*, a boy; *laikā-kā*, to a boy; *laikā ke*, of a boy; *laikā-man ke*, of boys There is no difference between the conjugation of transitive and of intransitive verbs. The construction of the past tense is always active, not passive. The syllables *ech* and *och*, meaning even and also, are profusely used in ordinary conversation. Thus *dai-ch-kā*, even to the mother; *tor-och*, thine also. Chhattīsgarhī is also known as Khaltahī or the language of the Khaloti or lowlands, a name given by residents of the Maikal hills to the Chhattīsgarh plain. In the Uriyā country the Chhattīsgarh plain is known as Laria, and the same name is given to the language. Chhattīsgarhī has no literature but a grammar of the dialect has been written in Hindī by Mr. Hīra Lāl Kāvyopādhyāya and translated by Dr. Grierson.[1] But Awadhī, the kindred dialect to Chhattīsgarhī, has a vast literature including the Rāmāyana of Tulsī Dās.

Other languages.

51. The Baghelī dialect, belonging to Baghelkhand or Rewah, which is the vernacular of Jubbulpore and Mandlā, is spoken in the northern zamīndāris adjoining Rewah by 53,000 persons. These zamīndāris, Pendrā and the others adjoining it, lie in the Rewah plateau and are not really a part of the Chhattisgarh country. Most of the Gonds speak Chhattīsgarhī with a slight admixture of Dravidian words, Gondī proper being returned by only 2000 persons. About 18,000 persons speak Uriyā.

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[1] J.A.S.B., Vol. LIX, 1890. Pt. I. Separate reprint, Calcutta, 1890.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE, KHAROD.

RELIGION.

52. The statistics of religion show that Hindus constitute 89 per cent. of the population and Animists 10 per cent. There are only about 10.000 Muhammadans, 252 Jains and 1959 Christians. The Hinduism of Chhattīsgarh, however, presents little real distinction from ordinary Animism, and the religion of the common people is made up of a mass of superstitions concerning witches, demons and spirits of all kinds.

Principal statistics.

53. The principal of the rural deities is Thākur Deo, the tutelary god of the village and crops. He often dwells in a little thatched hut outside the village. The deity is represented by a number of stones of different shapes in which he is supposed to dwell, and various pebbles and rock crystals or remains of cut stone from temples are added to the heap. Once in four or five years the worship of Thākur Deo is performed on the occasion of the Polā festival, being known as *garbh pūja*. A public subscription is raised because the worship is performed for the whole village to secure abundance of the crops and their immunity from disease. A black and tan goat and a pig are sacrificed to him on this occasion. All the men of the village keep awake the whole night, and in the morning the village Baigā cries horribly, beats a sort of drum and works himself up into a fit, when he is supposed to be possessed by the deity. He then orders the god to be brought forth from his shrine and the pebbles are taken out, washed in milk and water, and covered with a new white cloth. All the people take their food at the place and in the evening the cloth is lifted off and it is believed that the number of stones is increased or diminished by one. This trick is no doubt done by the Baigā's sleight-of-hand, but is taken by the people as an indication of the presence of the god; Sometimes the Baigā says that Thākur Deo has been lost from the village, and then he takes a boy and puts some magic powder into his eyes and sends him out to search for

Village deities.

Thākur Deo. The boy brings back some pebbles, and the Baigā places these in a bowl of milk, when it is said that they swell. But one of the pebbles disappears, and the boy on being again sent to search for it, ultimately finds it in Thākur Deo's shrine, a proof that the god has come back to the village. Dulhā Deo is the household god and a corner of each hearth is set apart for him. He was a young bridegroom who was carried off by a tiger on his way to his wedding. The Gonds say that it was Dulhā Deo's untoward fate which gave rise to their universal custom of sending the bride to be married at the bridegroom's house. The Rāwats worship Dulhā Deo at Diwāli and one of them becomes possessed by him and goes about beating everything he sees with a stick. Then the people say 'Dulhā Deo *ā gayā*,' or the god has come upon him. Two men catch hold of him and put peacock's feathers on his neck and arms, and he goes and dances about. Uneducated people are easily subject to such fits of religious frenzy as is shown in many other countries.

Village gods—continued.

54. Banjāri Deo dwells in the forest and travellers appeal to him to protect them from the attacks of wild beasts. He is represented by a heap of stones by the roadside at the entrance of the forest and every traveller makes his supplication by adding a stone to the heap. He is also worshipped for the protection of cattle, and forest fruits such as *chironji*,[1] wild plums and *tendu*[2] are offered to him. Dongarpāt is the hill godling who prevents earthquakes and volcanic eruptions and keeps off frost. It is said that on a hill known as Lachhman Dongri in the forest of Lormi a light appears at times and burns for half an hour during the night. This is a manifestation of Dongarpāt and it is said that the tāhutdār of Lormi always went and worshipped at the hill. Maswāsipāt is the god of hunting and hunters make an offering to

[1] Fruit of *chār* (*Buchanania latifolia*).

[2] *Diospyros tomentosa*.

him before setting out on expeditions. He is supposed to influence a certain part of the forest and will bring the game into it so that the hunter can shoot it easily. Chitharhai Devī is the goddess of rags and people give her a bit of old rag, hanging it on a thorny tree, in the hope that in return for it they will obtain a new cloth. They say 'Oh Devī, we give you our old cloth, give us a new one.' Trees may occasionally be seen covered with pieces of rag which are thus offered to the goddess. Once a year in the dark fortnight of the month of Māgh the lower castes offer a sacrifice to Rāt Mai or the night mother. Only the members of the household join in it and previous to the sacrifice they fast all day. Sweet oil is burnt in a lamp and covered with a brass plate, and with the lamp-black thus obtained curved lines are drawn over the walls of the house. The sacrifice consists of a black she-goat or a pig, and after the sacrificial animal has once entered the door of the house no portion of its body must be taken out again. The flesh is cooked and eaten, and the head is placed erect on the ground, offerings of grain and vegetables being made to it. The worshippers sit round it and sing songs in praise of the night mother. Next day the head is also eaten and the refuse is buried in a hole dug at the side of the main door of the house.

Customs connected with cultivation.

55. The agricultural year begins on Akti or the 3rd day of Baisākh (April-May). On that day a cup made of *palās* leaves and filled with rice is offered to Thākur Deo. In some villages the boys sow rice seeds before Thākur Deo's shrine with little toy ploughs. The cultivator then goes to his field and covering his hand with wheat flour and turmeric, stamps it five times on the plough. The mālguzār takes five handfuls of the seed consecrated to Thākur Deo and sows it, and each of the cultivators also sows a little. After this regular cultivation may begin on any day, though Monday and Friday are considered auspicious days for the commencement of sowing. On the Hareli, or festival of the

fresh verdure, which falls on the 15th day of Shrāwan (July-August), balls of flour mixed with salt are given to the cattle. The plough and all the implements of agriculture are taken to a tank and washed, and are then set up in the courtyard of the house and plastered with cow-dung. The plough is set facing towards the sun, and *ghī* and sugar are offered to it. An earthen pot is white-washed and human figures are drawn on it with charcoal, one upside down. It is then hung over the entrance to the house and is believed to avert the evil eye. All the holes in the cattle-sheds and court-yards are filled and levelled with gravel. While the rice is growing, holidays are observed on five Sundays and no work is done. Before harvest Thākur Deo must be propitiated with an offering of a white goat or a black fowl. Anyone who begins to cut his crop before this offering has been made to Thākur Deo is fined the price of a goat by the village community. Before threshing his corn each cultivator offers a separate sacrifice to Thākur Deo, of a goat, a fowl or a broken cocoanut. Each evening on the conclusion of a day's threshing, a wisp of straw is rubbed on the forehead of each bullock and a hair is then pulled from its tail, and the hairs and straw made into a bundle are tied to the pole of the threshing-floor. The cultivator prays 'Oh! God of plenty, enter here full and go out empty.' Before leaving the threshing-floor for the night some straw is burnt and three circles are drawn with the ashes, one round the heap of grain and the others round the pole. Outside the circles are drawn pictures of the sun, the moon, a lion and a monkey, or of a cart and a pair of bullocks. Next morning before sunrise the ashes are swept away by waving a winnowing fan over them. This ceremony is called *anjan chadhāna* or placing lamp-black on the face of the threshing-floor to avert the evil eye, as women put it on their eyes. Before the grain is measured it must be stacked in the form of a trapezium with the shorter end to the south, and not in that of a square or oblong heap. The measurer stands facing

the east, and having the shorter end of the heap on his left hand. On the larger side of the heap are laid the *kalara* or hook, a winnowing fan, the *dauri* a rope by which the bullocks are tied to the threshing pole, one or three branches of the *ber* or wild plum tree, and the twisted bundle of straw and hairs of the bullocks which had been tied to the pole. On the top of the heap are placed five balls of cow-dung and the *hom* or fire sacrifice is offered to it.

The first *kātha* [1] of rice measured is also laid by the heap. The measurer never quite empties his measure while the work is going on, as it is feared that if he does this, the god of abundance will leave the threshing-floor. While measuring he should always wear a turban. It is considered unlucky for any one who has ridden on an elephant to enter the threshing-floor, but a person who has ridden on a tiger brings luck. Consequently the Gonds and Bhumias, if they capture a young tiger and tame it, will take it round the country and the cultivators pay them a little to give their children a ride on it. To enter a threshing-floor with shod feet is also unlucky. Grain is not usually measured at noon but in the morning or evening.

Agricultural superstitions.

56. The cultivators think that each grain should bear a hundred-fold, but they do not get this as Kuver, the treasurer of the gods, or Bhainsāsur, the demon who lives in the fields, takes it. Bhainsāsur is worshipped when the rice is coming into ear, and if they think he is likely to be mischievous they give him a pig, but otherwise a smaller offering When the standing corn in the fields is beaten down at night they think that Bhainsāsur has been passing over it. He also steals the crop while it is being cut and is lying on the ground. Once Bhainsāsur was absent while the particular field in the village from which he stole his annual provision was cut and the crop removed, and afterwards he was heard crying that all his grain for the year had been lost.

[1] A measure containing 9 lbs. 2 oz. of rice.

Sometimes the oldest man in the house cuts the first five bundles of the crop and they are afterwards left in the fields for the birds to eat. And at the end of harvest the last one or two sheaves are left standing in the field and anyone who likes can cut and carry them away. In some localities the last sheaves are left standing in the field and are known as *barhonā*, or the giver of increase. Then all the labourers rush together at this last patch of corn and tear it up by the roots; everybody seizes as much as he can keeps it, the master having no share in this patch. After the *barhonā* has been torn up all the labourers fall on their faces to the ground and worship the field. In other places the *barhonā* is left standing for the birds to eat. This custom arises from the belief that the corn-spirit takes refuge in the last patch of grain, and that when it is cut he flies away or his life is extinguished. And the belief is supported by the fact that the rat and other vermin, who have been living in the field, seek shelter in the last patch of corn, and when this is cut have to dart out in front of the reapers. In some countries it is believed that the corn-spirit takes refuge in the body of one of these animals.

The Kabirpanthī sect.

57. The headquarters of the Mahant of the Kabirpanthī sect are at Kawardhā, a State which was formerly attached to Bilāspur, and the principal religious fair of the sect is held at Kudarmāl in the Jānjgir tahsīl. Some description of the sect may therefore properly find a place in a notice of the religion of the Bilāspur District. The reformer Kabir, who flourished between 1488—1512 A.D., was the founder of a sect attempting to reconcile the Hindu and Muhammadan religions. Various legends have now gathered about his life. According to the story told in the Bhakta Māla he was the son of a virgin Brāhman widow, who had been taken at her request to see the great reformer Rāmānand. He, unaware of her condition, saluted her with the benediction which he

thought acceptable to all women and wished her the conception of a son. His words could not be recalled and the widow conceived, but in order to escape the disgrace which would attach to her, exposed the child, which was found by a weaver and his wife and brought up by them. This child was Kabīr. Another version of the story is that the weaver's wife found the child, who was the deity incarnate, floating on a lotus leaf like Moses in the Nile on an ark. In any case the common belief is that Kabīr was brought up in a weaver's family. He became a drastic reformer, setting himself against the whole body of Hindu superstition. He rejected and ridiculed the Shāstras and Purānas; severely chastised the arrogance and hypocrisy of the Brāhmans; and abolished every malevolent distinction of caste, religion and sect. He taught that all who love God and do good are brothers, be they Hindus or Muhammadans. Idolatry and everything which approaches to it or suggests it is severely condemned and the temple should be only a house of prayer. Salvation, according to him, consists in attaining the highest knowledge, when it will be perceived that this world is an illusion and that the human and supreme soul are one. He considered the destruction of animal life in any form to be a crime. The doctrines of Kabīr are embodied in a great variety of works in different dialects of Hindī. They are the compositions of his disciples, who are known as Dās Kabīr, but are generally in the form of dialogues and profess to give his utterances and replies to questions. Kabīr left behind him a large number of apothegms and pithy sayings or texts, which are constantly on the lips of the educated classes, both Hindu and Muhammadan, at the present day. The influence of his teachings extended far beyond the limits of his own sect; Guru Nānak, the founder of the Sikh religion, was chiefly indebted for his religious ideas to Kabīr, and Dādu, another reformer, also borrowed largely from him.

The Kabīrpanthī Mahants.

58. One of the converts of the prophet was Dharam Dās, a Kasaundhan Baniā, who distributed all his wealth, eighteen lakhs of rupees, at Kabīr's bidding and became a mendicant. In reward for this Kabīr promised him that his family should endure for forty-two generations. The Mahants of Kawardhā claim to be the direct descendants of Dharam Dās. They marry among Kasaundhan Baniās and their sons are initiated and succeed them There are now two Mahants – Dhīrajnām Sāhib and Ugranām Sāhib—both of whom claim to be the legitimate possessor of the *gaddī* or headship of the sect. Ugranām was born of a Marār woman, and though acclaimed as the successor of his father, was challenged by Dhīrajnām, whose parentage was legitimate. Their disputes led to a case in the Bombay High Court which was decided in favour of Dhīrajnām and he accordingly occupies the seat at Kawardhā. But he is unpopular and little attention is paid to him. Ugranām lives at Kudarmāl in Jānjgir tahsīl and enjoys the real homage of the followers of the sect, who say that Dhīraj is the official Mahant, but Ugra the people's Mahant. The principal meeting place of the Kabīrpanthīs is the fair at Kudarmāl where they pay their respects to the Mahant and novices are initiated.

Members of the sect.

59. In the Central Provinces the weaving castes are usually Kabīrpanthīs because Kabīr was a weaver. The Brāhmans call it the weaver's religion. The Pankās are nearly all Kabīrpanthīs and it is probable that they are really Gāndas who have adopted this religion and become a fresh caste with a view to raising their social position. Many Koris, Balāhis, Koshtis and Mahārs belong to the sect. But it is professed too by others of the lower castes, especially the Telis, who also have the aim of escaping from their despised position in the caste system and by Chamārs and Dhobis, while a certain number of members of higher castes belong to it, as the Kurmīs, Ahīrs and Lodhis. The total number of Kabīrpanthīs

returned in the Province in 1901 was nearly half a million, of whom 99,260 were residents of Bilāspur. The sect is probably slightly gaining in popularity.

Customs and character of the sect.

60. The initiation of a Kabīrpanthī is called *chaukā*. A pot of water is placed on the ground with a lamp over it, and songs are sung in praise of Kabīr to the music of cymbals. A *bīra*, consisting of betelvine, raw sugar and a little of the core of the cocoanut, is eaten by the person to be initiated and each member of his family, and a *mantra* or sacred verse is whispered in his ear. The *guru* teaches him morning and evening prayers. A *kanthī* or small garland of beads is tied round his neck and the initiation is complete. Though there is no doubt that the underlying object of Kabīr's preaching was the abolition of the social tyranny of the caste system, which is the most real and to the lower classes the most hateful and burdensome feature of Hinduism; yet as in the case of so many other reformers his crusade has failed and a man who becomes a Kabīrpanthī does not cease to be a member of his caste or to conform to its observances. And a few Brāhmans who have become Kabīrpanthīs, though renounced by their own caste, have it is said been compensated by receiving high posts in the hierarchy of the sect. Only on the 13th day of Bhādon, which was the birthday of Kabīr, as many Kabīrpanthīs as can meet at the headquarters of the *guru* take food together without distinction of caste in memory of their founder's doctrine. The principal distinction between the Kabīrpanthīs and other Hindus of the middle and lower castes in Chhattisgarh is that the former do not eat meat and the latter do. Hindus of the lower classes other than Kabīrpanthis and Satnāmis are often known as Saktahas. Still the sect affords to the uneducated classes a somewhat higher ideal of spiritual belief and life than the chaotic medley of primitive superstitions and beliefs in witchcraft and devil-worship, from which the Brāhmans, caring only for the recognition of their social supremacy, make no

attempt to raise them. Besides the head of the sect, there are other *gurus* or priests, known as Bhandāris or Mahants, to whom he delegates his powers; and there is also an order of mendicant friars, who travel about dressed in long white robes and make proselytes for the sect. The Kabīr-panthīs bury their dead.

Christians.

61. Christians numbered 1959 in 1901, of whom 188 were Europeans, 94 Eurasians and 1679 natives. Bilāspur is an important railway centre and this accounts for the comparatively large number of Europeans and Eurasians. In 1891 there were less than 300 native Christians. The bulk of the converts belong to the German Evangelical Church of America and to an American Evangelical Church, the Disciples of Christ. This body started work at Bilāspur in 1885 under the Rev. M. D. Adams. The institutions maintained by it now comprise eight boys' schools, two girls' schools, a girls' orphanage, a women's and children's hospital and a church. A second station under the Rev. G. W. Jackson was opened at Mungelī in 1888, and here also a church, two hospitals, a leper asylum and schools are now supported by the mission. A third station was opened at Pendrā Road in 1901 by Rev. N. Madsen, where an orphanage, schools and dispensary are conducted and an attempt is being made to colonize Christians on jungle land. The Mennonite Mission also have stations in Chāmpa and Jānjgir. The German Evangelical Church has an important mission at Chandkhurī, which formed part of Bilāspur up till 1906, but is now in the Drug District. This Mission has recently opened a new station at Porthā on the Saktī State border. Bilāspur is in the Anglican diocese of Nāgpur, and is visited by a chaplain from Raipur. It is in the Roman Catholic diocese of Nāgpur.

CASTE.

General remarks.

62. The castes which are numerically most important are the Chamārs, who constitute 20 per cent. of the population and the Gonds

(14 per cent.). Other fairly strong castes are the Ahīrs or Rāwats, the Kurmīs and the Kawars. The proprietors of eight out of the ten zamīndāri estates belong to the Tawar subcaste of the Kawar tribe, while the zamīndārs of Pandaria and Kantelī are Rāj-Gonds. Outside the zamīndāris the principal castes of proprietors are Brāhmans, Baniās and Kurmīs. The Chamārs own some villages, but are idle and slovenly cultivators. The Brāhmans constitute only 3 per cent. of the population, but hold nearly 450 or 26 per cent. of the mālguzāri villages. The advent of the Marāthā Brāhmans dates from the time of Bimbāji Bhonsla, about the middle of the 18th century. They exercised great influence on the Marāthā Government and managed to secure a large number of villages, both in ordinary mālguzāri right and as rent-free assignments. The Brāhmans of Chhattīsgarh belong to the Kanaujia and Sarwaria groups of Northern India. They say that they have been settled in the country for fifty generations, and it is believed that a considerable influx of Brāhmans took place in the time of Rājā Kalyān Sahai (1536—1573 A.D.) who went to Delhi. A large proportion of the Chhattīsgarhī Brāhmans are landowners and tenants; others are land and legal agents, priests, village astrologers and mendicants.

Teli and Rāwat.

63. The Telis constitute 8 per cent. of the population but have only about 70 villages in Bilāspur. The most numerous subcastes are the Jhirias or Jhariās, the jungly Telis, and the Ekbahinyās who wear glass bangles only on the right hand, those on the left being of metal. This is a custom of several castes and the reason no doubt is that the women engage in some occupation which would make it inconvenient to have glass bangles on both hands. The Madpotwā Telis are a small subdivision living near the hills, who in former days used to distill intoxicants. They keep pigs and poultry, which the other Telis will not do. When the Teli first places the post of his *ghāni* or oil-press in the ground he buries beneath it five pieces of turmeric, some cowries and an areca nut.

The Teli's oil-press is always turned from right to left, as is the case with hand-mills of all kinds among the Hindus.

The Rāwats or cattle-herds constitute about 9 per cent. of the population, but have only 11 villages. Besides grazing cattle they act as household servants, and are the only caste from whom all others, including Brāhmans, will take water to drink. Some of the lower subcastes keep pigs and will take food from Gonds.

Kurmī.

64. The Kurmis constitute about 5 per cent. of the population and hold nearly 160 villages. The principal subcastes are Deshā and Chandnāhu. The Deshā Kurmīs belong mostly to the Mungeli tahsīl. They will not keep fowls as the other Kurmīs do, and try to avoid living in villages where poultry is reared. They will not clean cotton and their women are forbidden to wear nose-rings. A Deshā Kurmī is prohibited from marrying two wives who are sisters. He may not sell shoes, and consequently if he gets a pair which are too small for him, he cannot dispose of them for money and is reduced to making a gift of them to some poor Brāhman in order at any rate to obtain some accretion of spiritual merit. The whole subcaste belongs to a Kāshi *gotra*, the same being probably derived from Kāsyap or tortoise. The Chandnāhu Kurmīs are largely found in the Jānjgir tahsīl and are very industrious and capable cultivators, and therefore usually prosperous. They are however generally reputed to be stingy and are not very popular. They derive the name of Chandnāhu from Chandra the moon, and are divided into the Ekbahinyās and Dobahinyās, or those who wear glass bangles on one or both arms respectively. There is also an inferior group known as Pataria, who are generally despised because they grow hemp and will take their food in the fields in *patrīs* or leaf-plates.

Bairāgi and Gosain.

65. The Bairāgis and Gosains are two castes of ascetics, the devotees respectively of Vishnu and Siva. There are about 10,000

persons of this class in the District, but they have fallen away from the ideas of self-sacrifice and poverty in which the orders originated and hold proprietary rights in a considerable number of villages. The tāhutdār family of the Lormi estate, comprising about 100 villages, are Bairāgis, and there are two or three other prominent moneylenders. In Raipur several Gosain families hold considerable estates. It is probable that the founders of such properties were the Mahants or priests of temples enjoying a large local popularity and a corresponding income from the pious gifts of the faithful. After the maintenance of the temple had been provided for the balance would go to the Mahant, who by laying it out in land or setting up as a moneylender would accumulate an estate, and become a landed proprietor, relinquishing the performances of his office at the temple or employing a substitute. Besides the estates in Raipur and Bilāspur, the Feudatory States of Nāndgaon and Chhuikhadān belong to Bairāgi families and were obtained in the same manner. According to the rule of the caste the Bairāgi being celibate should select a *chelā* or disciple, on whom the property would devolve in the same manner as the priesthood of a temple. But in the important families the practice of celibacy has been abandoned and the men marry and have families in the ordinary manner. Mr. Chisholm remarked of this class:—'Strictly speaking they should not marry and are 'expected to remain models of manly purity like the knights 'and monks of the middle ages. In point of fact, however, 'while maintaining the letter of the law, especially in all 'cases where the inheritance of property is involved, they 'utterly ignore its spirit and their monasteries are too often 'dens of wickedness.' In this respect their condition is similar to that of the monasteries of Europe during considerable periods of their history. Both the orders, and especially the Gosains or followers of the sterner Sivite creed, have at times taken up the profession of arms like the crusading monks, and engaged primarily in religious causes;

they have on occasion turned their weapons to secular combats. The Nāga Gosains were a well-known band of fighters who went about nearly naked, having nothing but a skin round their loins. It is stated that they quelled a rebellion of the Rājā of Bastar on behalf of the Marāthās, for which grants of land were given to their leaders in Raipur.

Gond.

66. The Gonds constitute 14 per cent. of the population, but outside the important zamīndāri estate of Pandaria and the smaller one of Kantelī, which belong to Rāj-Gond proprietors, they have only 31 villages.

A more detailed description of the Brāhmans, Rāwats, Kurmīs, Telis, and Gonds has been given in the Raipur District Volume, and what has been said of them there applies almost equally to Bilāspur. Besides the Kawars and Gonds the District has several forest tribes found in comparatively small numbers as the BhaināS, Sawarās and Dhanwārs, and it is proposed to attempt some notice of these. The Satnāmi sect has been fully treated in the Raipur Volume, and this is practically equivalent to describing the Chamārs, but some information on their marriage and other customs remains for insertion here. Some mention must also be made of the Pankās or Gāndas.

Kawar.

67. The Kawars are a fairly important tribe residing in the hilly tracts to the north and east, and numbering about 37,000 persons or 4 per cent. of the population. All the zamīndārs except those of Pandaria and Kantelī belong to this tribe. The name is said to be derived from the fact that the ancestors of the tribe fought on the side of the Kauravas against the Pāndavas in the great battle of Hastināpur. But the zamīndārs call themselves Tawar instead of Kawar and say that they are descended from Tuar Rājputs. They wear the sacred thread but have not yet induced Brāhmans to take water from them. The tribe has eight subdivisions of which the Kamalbansī, Paikarā and Dūdh-Kawars are considered to rank above the Rathia, Chānti,

Cherwā and Rautia groups. The eighth subtribe is that of the zamīndārs and is known as Tanwar or Umrao. The Paikarās derive their name from Paik a foot-soldier, and no doubt formerly followed this occupation. They still worship a two-edged sword, known as 'Jhagrā Khānd,' on the day of Dasahra. The Kamalbansī, or stock of the lotus, may be so called as being the oldest subdivision; according to the belief that Brahma, the creator of the world, was himself born from a lotus. The Chānti, who derive their name from the ant, are considered to be the lowest group as that insect is the most insignificant of living things. The Rautia are probably the descendants of Kawar fathers and mothers of the Rāwat caste. Even now if a Kawar marries a Rāwat girl, she will be admitted into the tribe and her children will become full Kawars. Similarly the Rāwats have a Kaunria subcaste, who may also be the offspring of mixed marriages, and a Kawar girl if seduced by a Kaunria Rāwat is not expelled from her own community, as she would be for a liaison with any other man outside the tribe. The Cherwās are probably another hybrid group descended from Cheros and Kawars. The meaning of the name Dūdh or milk Kawar is not clear. The Kawars have totemistic septs and in the Paikarā subtribe a figure of the plant or animal after which the sept is named is made by each party at the time of marriage. Thus a bridegroom of the Bāgh or tiger sept prepares a small image of a tiger with flour and bakes it in oil; this he shows to the bride's family, while she on her part, assuming that she is, say, of the Bilwā or cat sept, will bring a similar image of a cat with her in proof of her origin. Marriage is usually adult and a bride-price is paid, partly in cash and partly in kind, which amounts on an average to Rs. 25. Contrary to the ordinary Hindu rule it is always the boy's father who proposes a union and the girl's father would think it derogatory to try and find a husband for his daughter. The Kawar says 'Shall my daughter leap over the wall to find a husband?' In conse-

quence of this girls not infrequently remain unmarried until a comparatively late age, especially in the zamīndāri families, where the provision of a husband of suitable rank may be difficult. The practice which obtains of exchanging girls between two families is known as *gunrāwat*, and that by which the expectant bridegroom sometimes serves for his wife as *gharjian*. After the wedding the couple go to a tank to bathe and each pours five pots full of water over the other. On their return the bridegroom shoots arrows at seven straw images of deer over his wife's shoulder and after each shot she puts a little sugar in his mouth. Widow-marriage is permitted except among the zamīndārs' sub-caste. The tribe bury their dead as a general rule. The bodies of men dying of small-pox must never be burnt because that would be equivalent to destroying the goddess, incarnate in the body. The corpses of cholera patients are buried, and sometimes dug up subsequently within a period of six months and burnt. In such a case they spread a layer of unhusked rice in the grave and address a prayer to the earth-goddess, stating that the body has been placed with her on deposit, and asking that she will give it back intact when they call upon her for it. They believe that in such cases the process of decomposition is arrested for six months. On ordinary occasions they place in the grave a little til, cotton, urad, and unhusked rice, to serve as seed grain for the dead man's cultivation in the other world. They also put a plate, a brass vessel and a cooking pot on the grave, but these are taken by the Dhobi or washerman. When a man is killed by a tiger they have a ceremony called 'Breaking the string,' or the connection which they believe the animal establishes with a family on having tasted its blood. Otherwise they believe that the tiger would gradually kill off all the other members of the same family, and when he has finished with them would proceed to other families in the same village. The belief no doubt arises from the tiger's habit of frequenting the locality of a village

from which it has once obtained a victim, in the natural expectation that others may be forthcoming from the same source. In this ceremony the village Baigā is painted with red ochre and soot to represent the tiger and proceeds to the place where the victim was carried off. Having picked up some of the blood-stained earth in his mouth he tries to run away to the jungle but the spectators hold him back until he spits out the earth. This represents the tiger being forced to give up his victim. The Baigā then ties a string round all the members of the dead man's family and sacrifices a fowl; he then breaks the string and the tiger's connection with his victim's family is considered to be severed. The Kawars of the wilder tracts believe in the universal prevalence of spirits. They consider even that every article of household furniture is tenanted by a spirit and that if anyone steals or injures it without the owner's leave the spirit will bring some misfortune on him in revenge. Theft is said to be unknown among them, partly on this account and partly because few of them have any property worth stealing. The Kawars have no language of their own but speak a corrupt form of Chhattīsgarhī. Many of them are *thekedārs* or farmers of the poor villages in the zamīndāri estates, and others are cultivators and labourers. Only those of the Rautia subcaste weave twine and ropes and make sleeping cots. The Kawars are considered by the Hindus as exactly on a level with, and almost indistinguishable from, the Gonds. They are said to be very slow in making up their minds, and a saying about them is :—'The Gānda's *panchāyat* '(caste committee) always ends in a quarrel; the Gond's '*panchāyat* cares only for the feast; and the Kawar's *panchāyat* 'takes a year to arrive at a decision.' But when the Kawars have decided they act with vigour.

Dhanwār.

68. The Dhanwārs or Dhanuhārs number about 7000 persons and live in the wildest zamīndāri jungles. They are one of the most primitive tribes and up till recently have lived by hunting

and collecting forest roots and fruits. They derive their name from *dhanu* or bow ; they freely admit Kawar women into the tribe and will take cooked food from them. It is possible therefore that they are an offshoot of the more important Kawar tribe. Many of them have now become farm-servants and labourers and they also make bamboo matting and *dholgis* or enormous baskets for holding grain. They will not make small baskets and fans because this is the occupation of the Turīs, a caste whom they look down on. The Dhanwārs say that their ancestors were a pair called Nāga Lodhā and Nāgi Lodhī, who were dug out from the ground by a tigress when pawing up the earth in her den. The word *lodhā* means a wild dog in Chhattīsgarhī, and it would thus appear that the Dhanwārs believe themselves to be descended from the wild animals of the forest. The tribe have no subdivisions but are split up into the usual exogamous septs, which in their case are totemistic, or named after animals and plants. One of the septs is called Manakhia or 'an eater of men' and may indicate that cannibalistic practices formerly existed in the tribe. At their weddings they kill a goat and make the bride and bridegroom walk over its body, treading in its blood. They bury the dead and first carry the corpse seven times round the open grave saying ' This is your last marriage' (with the earth). When an elder of the family dies they usually abandon their hut in the belief that it will be haunted by his spirit. A man killed by a tiger becomes a *Baghia Masān* or tiger imp and a woman who dies during pregnancy a *Churel*, both these kinds of spirits being very troublesome to the living, and only to be laid by an efficient *Gunia* or sorcerer. The headman of the village officiates as the caste priest. Formerly the tribe had a class of bigger priests known as Parganihā. But on one occasion when a rich Dhanwār had just married a pretty young wife, in the joy of his heart he made a vow that he would give the Parganihā whatever he should demand. The priest asked for the young bride and the Dhanwār in consequence of his vow was forced to surrender her, but this

incident led to the abolition of the class of Parganihās. The Dhanwārs usually live outside the village and owing to their more primitive habits rank lower than the Gonds and Kawars.

Bhainā.

69. The Bhainās are a small tribe numbering about 6000 persons and probably of mixed origin. They may be an offshoot from the Baigā tribe mingled with the Kawars and Gonds. There is a tradition that they were formerly the rulers of this locality and were ousted by the Kawars; and several of the old forts found in the Bilāspur District are ascribed to them, especially that of Bilaigarh now included in Raipur. The Bhainās will take food from the Kawar tribe and admit them into their community; while the Kawars at all their ceremonial feasts, at weddings, funerals and on other occasions must feed a Bhainā before they eat themselves. This custom may perhaps be explained as a recognition that they have supplanted the Bhainās in the possession of the land. Several of the family or clan names of the Bhainās are taken from those of other tribes and castes, and the members of such clans show respect to the caste after which they are named, and avoid any occasion of quarrelling with them. Those whose septs are named after some natural object are tattooed with a representation of it. Like so many other castes in Chhattīsgarh the Bhainās have the two divisions of Uriyā and Laria. The term Laria is applied to the residents of a border tract between Chhattīsgarh proper and the Uriyā country, whose speech differs somewhat from ordinary Chhattīsgarhī. When the date of a Bhainā wedding has been fixed each party takes a rope and ties as many knots in it as there are days to the wedding; one knot is then untied daily in order to keep count of the date. The Bhainās like the Binjhwārs have an arrow for their badge, which is used as a sign-manual and mark of ownership.

Sawarā.

70. The Sawarās or Saonrs are a historical tribe who are held to have given their name to the Suarmār zamīndāri and perhaps to

Seorīnarāyan. They are mentioned in old Sanskrit literature and have been identified with the Suari of Pliny and the Sabari of Ptolemy. According to the local legend the first ancestor of the tribe was an old Bhīl hermit named Sawar who lived in Kharod two miles from Seorīnarāyan. The god Jagannāth had at this time appeared in Seorīnarāyan and the old Sawar used to worship him, being the only person who knew where the god dwelt. The king of Orissa had built the great temple at Purī and wished to instal Jagannāth in it, so he sent a Brāhman to fetch him from Seorīnarāyan. But nobody could bring him to the god except the old hermit Sawar. The Brāhman long besought him in vain to be allowed to see the god and even went so far as to marry his daughter, and finally the old man consented to take him blind-fold to the place. The Brāhman however tied some mustard seeds in a corner of his cloth and made a hole in it so that they dropped out one by one on the way. When the mustard grew up he again found his way to the god and begged him to go to Purī. Jagannāth consented and floated down the Mahānadi in the form of the log of wood, which was afterwards partly carved into his image and is still to be seen in the temple of Purī. But as a reward to the old hermit Sawar for his devotion he ordained that the place of his abode should bear their names conjoined and accordingly it has since been called Seorīnarāyan. It is noticeable that according to this story the tribe consider that their first ancestor was a Bhīl. The Sawarās have two main subdivisions in Bilāspur, Laria or Chhattīsgarhī and Uriyā. The Uriyā branch say that they are divided into 80 *barags* or exogamous septs and each of these is further split up into two branches named Khuntia and Joria. The Khuntia are those who bury or burn their dead near a *khūnt* or stump of an old tree, and the Jorias those who dispose of them near a *jor* or brook. Adult marriage is usual but the Joria Sawarās consider it a great sin to have a girl unmarried after she is mature. If therefore no match can be arranged for her they

make her go through the ceremony with a tree or an old man, and afterwards dispose of her as a widow to any man who wants her, whether married or otherwise. The Sawarās are great sorcerers and their charms, known as Sābari Mantra, are considered to be very efficacious in appeasing the spirits of persons who have died a violent death.

Chamār.

71. The Chamārs number about 20 per cent. of the population of the District, and own 81 villages. Their physical appearance and stature are often of a noticeably fine order and some of the Chamārs are fairer than Brāhmans. It is on record that on one occasion a European officer mistook a Chamār for a Eurasian and addressed him in English. Curiously enough the same feature has been observed in the Punjab, where Sir D. Ibbetson remarked that the women were celebrated for their beauty and loss of caste was often to be attributed to too great a partiality for a Chamārin. In Chhattīsgarh a permanent feud exists between the Chamārs and Hindus and there is little doubt that the Satnāmi movement is principally an expression of this in the form of a religious revolt against the tyranny of Brāhmanism and the caste system. The majority of the Chhattīsgarhī Chamārs are cultivators and it is this class who are the principal supporters of the Satnāmi reformation. Those who still use hides and work in leather belong either to the Kanaujia or Ahirwār subcastes, the former of whom take their name from the well-known classical town of Kanauj in Northern India, while the latter are said to be the descendants of unions between Chamār fathers and Ahīr mothers. But the Chamārs who follow their hereditary calling are sometimes known as Paikahā, as opposed to the Satnāmis who have generally eschewed it. Those who cure skins have usually the right to receive the hides of the village cattle in return for removing the carcases, each family of Chamārs having allotted to them a certain number of tenants, whose dead cattle they take, while their women are the hereditary midwives of the village.

Such Chamārs have the designation of Meher. The Kanaujias make shoes out of a single piece of leather while the Ahirwārs cut the front separately. The latter also ornament their shoes with fancy work consisting of patterns of silver thread on red cloth. No Ahirwār girl is married until she has shown herself proficient in this kind of needle-work.

Marriage.

72. The Chamārs have both infant and adult marriage. Like other castes in Chhattīsgarh they have two forms known as the *barī* and *chhotī shādi* or large and small marriage; the former is performed at the bride's house and entails the full ceremony, while those who cannot afford this have it at the bridegroom's house, when the rejoicings are curtailed and the expense decreased. A price is usually paid for the bride and varies from twenty to one hundred and fifty rupees in proportion to her attractions. An instance is known of six hundred rupees having been given for a wife. The marriage ceremony follows the standard type prevalent in the locality. On his journey to the girl's house the boy rides on a bullock and is wrapped up in a blanket. When the procession arrives at the bride's village a kind of sham fight takes place which is thus described by the Rev. E. M. Gordon of Mungelī:[1]—'As the bridegroom's party approached the house 'of the bride, the boy's friends lifted him up on their shoul'ders, and surrounding him on every side they advanced, 'swinging their sticks in a threatening manner. As they 'neared the house they crossed sticks with the bride's friends, 'who gradually fell back and allowed the bridegroom's friends 'to proceed in their direction. The women of the house 'gathered with the baskets and fans and some threw about 'rice in pretence of self-defence. When the sticks of the 'bridegroom's party struck the roof of the bride's house or of 'the marriage shed her friends considered themselves defeated

[1] From an article contributed to the J.A.S.B. See also Indian Folk Tales (London, Elliot, Stock 1908).

'and the sham fight was at an end.' Widows commonly remarry and may take for a second husband any one they please except their first husband's elder brother and ascendant relations. Widows are either known as *barandī* or *randī*, the *randī* being a widow in the ordinary sense of the term and the *barandī* a girl who has been married but has not lived with her husband Such a girl is not required to break her bangles on her husband's death, and being naturally more in demand as a second wife her father obtains a good price for her. When a widow marries a second time her first husband's property remains with his family and also his children, unless they are very young, when the mother may keep them for a few years and subsequently send them back to their father's relatives. Divorce is permitted for a variety of causes and is usually effected in the presence of the caste *panchāyat* or committee by the husband and wife breaking a straw as a symbol of the rupture of union. Marriage ties are generally of the loosest description and bigamy and adultery are scarcely recognised as offences.

Death and religious beliefs.

73. The caste usually bury the dead with the feet to the north like the Gonds and other aboriginal tribes. They say that heaven is situated towards the north and dead men should be placed in a position to start for that direction. Before burying a corpse they often make a mark on the body with butter, oil or soot, and when a child is subsequently born into the same family, they look for any kind of mark on the corresponding place on its body. If any such be found they consider the child as a reincarnation of the deceased person. Still-born children and those who die before the *chhattī* or sixth day ceremony of purification are not taken to the burial ground, but their bodies are placed in an earthen pot and buried below the doorway or in the courtyard of the house. In such cases no funeral feast is exacted and some people believe that the custom tends in favour of the mother bearing another child. Others say however that its object is

to prevent the *tonhī* or witch from getting hold of the body of the child, and raising its spirit to life to do her bidding as Matia Deo.[1] Mr. Gordon states that it is impossible to form a clear conception of the beliefs of the village people as to the hereafter.[2] 'That they have the idea of hell as a place of pun-'ishment may be gathered from the belief that if salt is spilt 'the one who does this will in *pātāl* or the infernal region 'have to gather up each grain of salt with his eyelids. Salt 'is for this reason handed round with great care and it is con-'dered unlucky to receive it in the palm of the hand; it is 'therefore invariably taken in a cloth or in a vessel. There 'is a belief that the spirit of the deceased hovers round fami-'liar scenes and places, and on this account whenever it is 'possible, it is customary to destroy or to desert the house in 'which any one has died. If a house is deserted the custom 'is to sweep and plaster the place, and then, after lighting 'a lamp, to leave it in the house and withdraw altogether. 'After the spirit of the dead has wandered around restlessly 'for a certain time, it is said that it will again become 'incarnate and take the form of man or of one of the lower 'animals.'

Pankā.

74. The Pankās form about 5 per cent. of the population. The caste appears to be an offshoot from the impure Gānda caste of weavers and village watchmen and to consist of those Gāndas who have become members of the Kabīrpanthī sect. A saying current about them is 'the Pankā (*panī-kā*) is born of water, and his body is made of drops of water; but there were Pankās before Kabīr.' The derivation, which is of course fanciful, appears to refer to the story of Kabīr having been found as a baby floating in a lotus-leaf on a tank. The saying may be supposed to indicate obscurely that prior to the rise of Kabīr the Pankās were Hindus of low caste. The Pankās have, at least in theory, abjured the consumption of

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[1] From Mr. Gordon's paper. See Indian Folk Tales, pages 49, 50.

[2] *Ibidem.*

flesh and liquor, and therefore they rank somewhat higher than the Gāndas. The bulk of them are now cultivators and labourers. Many also serve as village watchmen and in this case the name of Gānda is applied to them as a professional term. The Gāndas proper are distinctively known as Bajgaria, because they are regularly employed as village musicians, the name having this signification. The Pankās will admit members of all except the impure castes into the community. The proselyte is shaved, and the other Paṇkās wash their feet and let the water drip on to his head as a means of purification. He then takes a stick and breaks it across as a symbol of his renunciation of his former caste. The *kanthī* or necklace of *tulsī* beads is placed about his neck and some texts are whispered into his ear.

75 The Ghasias are a low caste of grooms and grass-cutters being known alternatively as Thanwār. They also sell baskets, winnowing fans, bamboo combs and marbles. The Laria or Chhattīsgarhī Ghasias are the highest subdivision. Other groups are the Uriyā Ghasias, who do the work of sweepers, the Dingkuthia who, as their name implies, castrate bullocks and buffaloes, the Māndarchawā who are employed in making drums, and the Dolbahā Ghasias who are *pālki* bearers, the word *dolā* signifying a litter in Chhattīsgarhī. The women are commonly employed as midwives. The Ghasias are an impure caste and the Rāwats will not wash their plates for them. They are much addicted to the consumption of liquor and of intoxicating drugs. Their household deity is Dulhā Deo, whose altar is always found near the cooking-place. The Ghasias entertain a great aversion for Kāyasths and account for it in the following manner :—On one occasion the son of the Kāyasth minister of the Rājā of Ratanpur went out for a ride followed by a Ghasia *sais*. The boy was wearing costly ornaments, and the Ghasia's cupidity being excited, he attacked and murdered the child, stripped him of his ornaments and threw the body down a

Ghasia.

well. The murder was discovered and in revenge the minister killed every Ghasia, man, woman or child that he could lay his hands on. The only ones who escaped were two pregnant women who took refuge in the hut of a Gānda and were sheltered by him. To them were born a boy and a girl and the present Ghasias are descended from the pair. Therefore a Ghasia will eat even the leavings of a Gānda, but will take nothing from the hands of a Kāyasth.

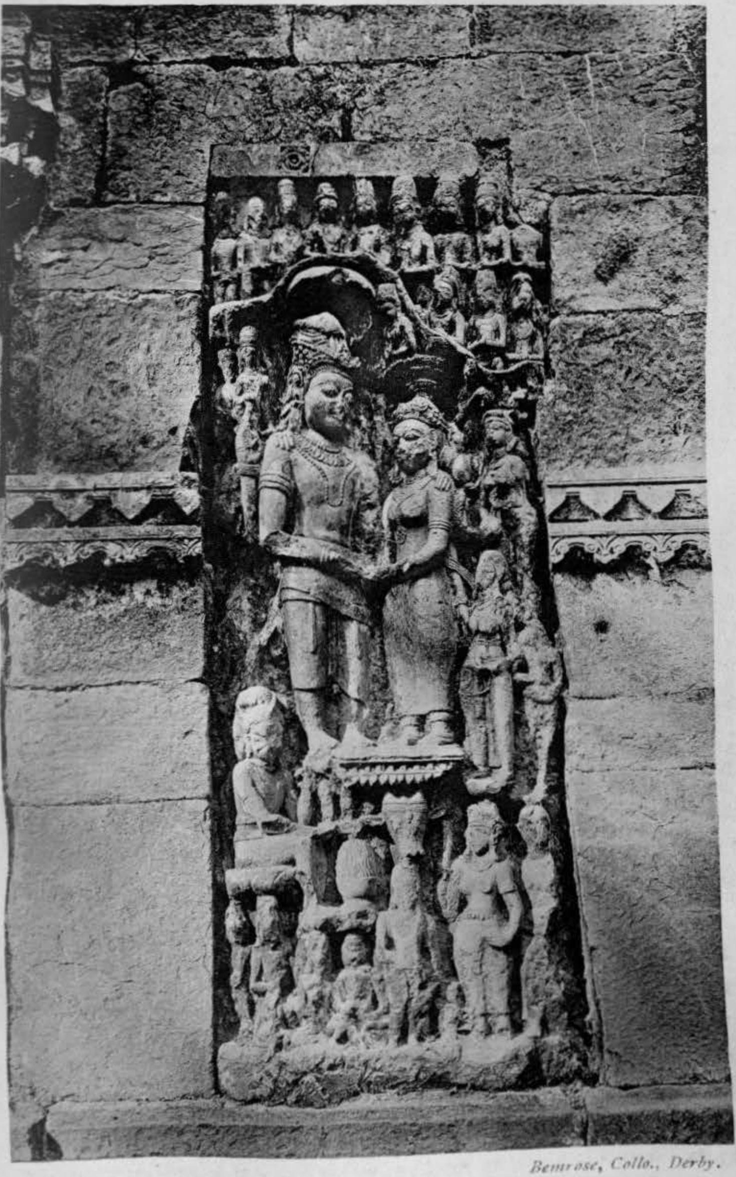
Chauhān.

76. The Chauhāns are a low caste of village watchmen, considered to be the descendants of the irregular aliiances of Rājputs with kept women. They have two subdivisions, Baghel and Dusādh, of whom the former are of purer descent than the latter. The Chauhāns profess to abstain from the consumption of liquor, and fowls, pork and beef. But they rank low in the social scale and have a bad reputation for committing thefts. The Audhalias are another low caste, who are held to be the descendants of Daharia Rājputs by their kept women. They are impure and keep pigs.

SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS.

Marriage customs.

77. Marriages are generally arranged in Chhattīsgarh by the parents of the parties direct and not by intermediaries such as the barber and the Brāhman. Among the middle and lower classes adult marriage largely prevails, but there is a tendency to make the age earlier. Proposals for a betrothal are always made by the father of the boy and it is considered derogatory for a man to try and arrange a marriage for his daughter however old she may be; though in Hindustān this latter course is always adopted. The betrothal ceremony always takes place at the house of the girl and consists in the presentation to her of a small cloth and some cakes of gram, flour and sugar. The wedding may be celebrated in two ways known as *barī shādi* and *chhotī shādi* or a great and little marriage respectively. For the former marriage sheds are erected at the houses both of the bride and



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

SCULPTURE OF MARRIAGE OF SIVA, RATANPUR.

bridegroom, and the bridegroom goes to the bride's village with his party and the wedding is held there. A small marriage is held at the bridegroom's house and it is only here that the shed is erected. The girl comes to his house and is married there and the expenditure is very much less. This form of marriage is common among the poorer classes. The *deotalā* or worship of the village gods is an essential part of all weddings. The women of the caste take rice and turmeric to the Baigā or village priest and offer them to the deities which he keeps in his house, and afterwards make the round of those located within the village boundary. Another ceremony is the *rāti bhāji* or night meal in which the younger sister of the bride and some other women go to the bridegroom's lodging and give him a tooth-stick, water for washing his hands and feet, and some food. Before the marriage the bride and bridegroom measure rice with each other, probably as an omen that it may be plentiful in their house; seven little heaps of rice are placed on the ground in the shed and each time that the couple go round the marriage post the bridegroom takes the right foot of the bride in his hand and makes her kick one of the heaps away. Elsewhere the bride takes the lead in walking round the marriage post, but among the middle and lower castes of Chhattīsgarh the bridegroom goes first. Among the Bhainās during the first six rounds that the bride and bridegroom make round the post they put their feet against the ground as they go, but on the seventh round they walk in the ordinary manner. At the wedding the bridegroom smears vermilion on the parting of the bride's hair from the forehead up to the top of the crown and puts a dot on the root of her nose. This line of vermilion is the mark of a married woman as it is not worn by girls or widows. It is not so far as is known regularly used in this manner elsewhere in the Central Provinces, though it is also the sign of a married woman in Bengal. But the fashion is now on the decline in Chhattīsgarh as it is believed to injure the growth of the hair.

When the bride and bridegroom reach the latter's house after the marriage, they are received by the women of his household at the door of the bridegroom's marriage shed. All the unwidowed women of his family then walk round the newly-wedded couple seven times with a pestle tied with green leaves, and after this make another seven rounds with a churning pot. Among the Chhattīsgarhī Marāthās the bride and bridegroom chew betel-leaves after the marriage ceremony and then spit them out at each other. The Sonkars sacrifice a goat of red colour at the marriage post. Among the Pankās all the male guests are shaved at the house of the bride or bridegroom and then have a bath in the court-yard.

Widow-marriage.

78. Except among the highest castes it is the general practice for widows to remarry, and a widow is commonly expected to marry her late husband's younger brother. Failing him she may marry anybody she pleases, and in such cases a price is always paid for her either to her parents or to the relatives of her deceased husband. The essential part of the ceremony consists in the placing of new glass bangles on the widow's wrist.

Customs at birth.

79. Before the birth of a first-born child in the last month of pregnancy a ceremony called *sidhorī* is performed. The relatives of the pregnant woman prepare some attractive food and bring it to her house, where she is seated in the *chauk* or space marked out with lines for eating in. Music is played and the food is placed in her lap. The name comes from the word *sidhor*, which signifies 'the craving of a pregnant woman' and the food is supposed to satisfy this. Women during pregnancy have a longing for special and sometimes for unnatural food, as is shown by the common practice of eating earth, especially the black clay called *kanhār*, or whitewash scraped from the walls of houses. Chamār women usually act as midwives. Before the birth the

midwife commonly dips her hand in oil and stamps it on the wall, and it is believed that she can tell by the manner in which the oil trickles down whether the child will be a boy or a girl. On the birth of a child the navel-string is cut and generally burnt, contrary to the practice over the rest of the Province where it is invariably buried. Among the agricultural castes the child as soon as it is born is laid in a winnowing fan filled with rice and this is then given to the nurse. As a rule a woman receives nothing either to eat or drink for three days after she has borne a child. On the fourth day she is given a warm decoction of ginger, areca nut, coriander, turmeric and other pungent ingredients with a hot taste; and she receives regular food for the first time on the sixth day. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the death-rate of women in child-birth is high; though there is now a tendency to amelioration in the treatment. The child is not allowed to be suckled till the third day, but prior to that is given a mixture of the urine of a calf boiled with some medicinal root, or of honey and water. On the sixth day after birth the child is often branded on the stomach with the point of a sickle, twenty or thirty small marks being made. This treatment is supposed to prevent it from catching cold. Another common practice is to rub the limbs of a child twice a day with warm castor oil. On the birth of a first child in a cultivator's family a *badhai* or congratulatory ceremony is performed. The midwife, the barber and the washerman accompanied by musicians go to the house of the woman's mother or the grandmother of the child; the midwife plasters the courtyard with cow-dung, the washerman erects a bamboo with a white cloth tied to the top as a flag, and the barber smears her forehead with vermilion. They receive presents of money and clothing and then go and repeat the ceremony at the houses of the other maternal relatives of the child. Still-born children and those who die before the performances of the ceremony of purification on the sixth day are

not taken to the ordinary site to be buried, but the body is placed in an earthen vessel and buried in the doorway or yard of the house. Some say that this custom renders the mother more likely to have another child, or it may be done with a view to saving the expense of the feast which would have to be given for an ordinary burial. Another explanation is that the bodies of still-born and young children are especially sought after by the *tonhīs* or witches, who make them into a *muka deo* or dumb spirit ready to do their behest; and that the body is therefore buried in the confines of the house so that the witches may not get hold of it. Owing to the enforcement of sanitary regulations this practice is now being given up. If three boys or three girls have been born to a woman the people think that the fourth should be of the same sex in order to make up two pairs. And if the child is of different sex they lay it under a basket and kindle a fire in a circle all round it. After this it is considered that the ill-luck has been removed. The ceremony is called *titrā* or *titrī* for a boy or girl respectively.

Devices at child birth.

80. If parturition is delayed various devices of a magical nature are employed for expediting it. In one of these a line of boys and men is made from the house to the nearest water; and a brass vessel is passed from hand to hand from the house, filled at the water and passed back again to the house as quickly as possible. It is then given to the woman to drink and it is supposed that the quality of rapid transit which the water has acquired will be imparted to the woman, and delivery will thus be hastened. Another method is to make the woman gaze on a figure of a maze with horsemen passing along it, which is called Rājā Bhoj's army. It is thought that as her eye follows painfully the track of one of the horsemen trying to disentangle the path which he would pursue through the maze, so the complications attending delivery will be removed and the child will be ejected from the womb. Or a vessel of water is drawn out

of the well with one hand and carried to a medicine-man without being touched by the other hand, and after he has said some charms over it is given to the woman to drink. Or some of the clay left on the potter's wheel is scraped off and given her to drink with water. Or they place the ring worn by the husband on his big toe, or the handle of a sword made in Shāh Jahān's reign in water, and give it to the woman to drink. It is said that if a sword of Shāh Jahān's reign is placed with a lot of others in the dark and one of them is taken at random this one will always come to the hand. It is supposed that the handles of swords of Shāh Jahān's time are made of an amalgam of the 'Ashta dhāta' or eight metals, which has magical virtues of different kinds.

Disposal of the dead.

81. Burial of the dead is more common in Chhattīsgarh than in other parts of the Province. Cremation is however now practised by the higher classes and is considered a more honourable method of disposal by those who can afford it. The bodies of rich men are sometimes burned with sandalwood and branches of the sacred *bel* or *tulsī* are laid on them. It is considered more holy to burn the body with cow-dung cakes than with ordinary wood. But nowadays sometimes if the rain comes on and the body will not burn they use kerosine oil. Graves are always dug from north to south. This custom may perhaps be taken from the Gonds and other Dravidian races among whom it also prevails; but some of the people say that the head of the world is to the north and others that in the Satyug or golden age the sun rose in the north. The Hindus bury the corpse of a man face downwards and that of a woman face upwards. When the grave has been filled in and a mound made to mark the spot, those who are present at the burial each make five small balls of earth and place them in a heap at the head of the grave. While doing this they address the corpse saying 'Go, become incarnate in some human being.' This custom is called *Panch lakariyā* or five sticks, and therefore must be

copied from that obtaining at a cremation, when each mourner brings five small sticks and throws them on the funeral pyre; its original meaning probably in the latter case was that the mourners should assist the family by bringing a contribution of wood to the pyre. As adopted in burial it seems to have no significance but has some resemblance to the European custom by which the mourners throw a little dust into the grave. It is considered a meritorious act to be present at a burial and there is a saying that a man who has himself conducted a hundred funerals will become a Rājā in his next birth. The idea has no doubt been promulgated by the Brāhmans for their own profit. After a funeral each person who has helped to carry the bier takes up a clod of earth and with it touches the place on his shoulder where the bier rested, his waist and his knee, afterwards dropping the clod to the ground. It is believed that by so doing he removes from his shoulder the weight of the corpse which would otherwise press on it for some time.

Offerings for the dead.

82. When a Brāhman is at the point of death a cow or calf is sometimes brought into the room and its tail being held over his face, water is poured on to it so as to flow down into his mouth. It is considered that on this calf he will be able to cross the river Baitarnī, the Hindu Styx. Others put Ganges water, a leaf of the *tulsī* plant, rice cooked in Jagannāth's temple, or a piece of gold into his mouth. Two kinds of Brāhman priests officiate at funerals, the Malai, who reads the prayers for the dead, and the Kattahā or Mahāpātra Brāhman, who takes the gifts offered for the dead man's soul. The latter is utterly despised and looked down on by all other Brāhmans and by the community generally and is sometimes made to live outside the village. The Kattahā receives grain, cooking and eating vessels, a bed, and a horse and cow if the owner can afford it. A part of his business is to eat a quantity of cooked food, which will form the food of the deceased in the other world. It is of great spiritual importance

to the dead man's soul that the Brāhman should finish the dish set before him, and if he does not do so the soul will fare badly; he takes advantage of this by stopping in the middle of the meal, saying that he has eaten all he is capable of and cannot go on, so that the relations have to give him large presents to induce him to finish the food. The Malai is an ordinary Brāhman, who officiates at funerals as the Purohit does at births and marriages. He also receives presents in money according to the means of his clients which it is supposed will benefit the dead man's soul in the next world, but no disgrace attaches to the acceptance of these. The *pindās* or sacrificial cakes are not given to the Brāhman but are thrown into the Ganges or some river close by.

Mourning and laying spirits.

83. When a man's last moments have come he is taken off his cot and laid on the ground, so that the cot may not be made unlucky by his dying on it. The cot is then turned upside down and the body is carried out for burial on it in this fashion, with the legs of the cot pointing upwards. It would probably be considered unlucky for the dead man to lie on the same side of the cot as a living man. The corpse is generally wrapped in old clothes and a new piece of cloth is placed over it at the burning *ghāt.* After a death when the mourners return from burning or burying the corpse all the principal people of the village go to the dead man's house and condole with his family. During the period of mourning when the family go to bathe, they march one behind the other in Indian file. And on the tenth day all the people of the village accompany them, the men first, and after they have returned the women, all marching in Indian file. When a zamīndār dies his heir observes no mourning and is not defiled. He becomes zamīndār at once and does not see his predecessor's face or follow him to the grave, but the body is carried out at the back door of the house by the relatives and friends. The reason of this custom is obviously that the new zamīndār should not be rendered incapable by the impurity which

attaches to those who have performed rites during the period of mourning, of securing his succession and asserting his rights against other possible claimants. Among the Saontās when a man is about to die he is tied on to his cot in the centre of his hut, and then the people set fire to the hut and run away out of sight. This is no doubt done in order to prevent the dead man's spirit from following and troubling them.[1] If a woman has died in child-birth or after the birth of a child and before the performance of the sixth day ceremony of purification, her hands are tied with a cotton thread when she is buried in order that her spirit may be unable to rise and trouble the living. It is believed that the souls of such women become evil spirits or *churels*. Thorns are also placed over her grave for the same purpose. The anniversaries of the dead are celebrated during Pitripaksh or the dark fortnight of Kunwār. If a man died on the third day of any fortnight of the year his anniversary is celebrated on the third day of this fortnight, and so on. On that day it is supposed that his spirit will revisit its earthly home, where his relatives reside. But the souls of women all return to their homes on the ninth day of the fortnight, and on the thirteenth day come the souls of all those who have met with a violent death, as by a fall, or have been killed by wild animals or snakes. The spirits of such persons are supposed in virtue of their untimely end to entertain a special grudge against the living. The fact that they should come on the thirteenth day perhaps indicates a belief in the number thirteen being unlucky, but no other instance of this has as yet been met with.

Return of the soul.

84. When a prominent member of the family dies among the Chamārs, it is customary to make a mark on his body either with *ghī*, oil or soot, and a similar mark is then looked for on the bodies of infants subsequently born into the family. If some thing of the kind is found the child is considered to be a reincarnation

[1] This custom is recorded by Mr C. U. Wills from hearsay.

of the dead man's spirit. Among the Rāwats, Gonds and Dhīmars the custom prevails of bringing back the dead man's soul. On the fourth day after the burial relatives go to a river or tank, and some of them enter the water while others stand on the bank. These latter call out the name of the deceased person and ask if he or she has come back. As soon as one of those in the water has caught a fish or insect he answers yes, and the animal, which is supposed to represent the dead man's soul, is taken back to the house and enshrined there and worshipped. The Sonkars (gardeners) make a raised circle of cow-dung on a wooden board and fill the inside with water. A fish is caught and put into the water and the relatives stand round with their hands outstretched. The fish is then made to jump out and is caught in somebody's hand, and it is believed that the soul has come back. The fish is put back into some river or tank.

Proverbs and riddles

85. Although the people of Chhattīsgarh do not display any great measure of skill or energy in cultivation, they recognise in their proverbs how necessary it is to success, as for instance :—' If a man takes his pick in his hand, agriculture is the best of all occupations ; but if he has to ask where the plough is, his cattle will soon be sold up '; and again ' If you go into the field you will get the whole crop ; if you sit on the bank you will get half; but if you stay at home (while your servants do the work) you will get none at all.' A saying about land is—' When ploughing *bhāta* (yellow gravelly soil) the cattle will jump for lightness of heart, but when the harvest comes the master will beat his head ; but if he sows *kanhār* (black soil) he will marry off his whole family.' Tne following is a somewhat uncomplimentary saying about the different castes :—

Hintī-bintī Thākur māne, Brāhman māne khāe,
Nīch jāt lathiai māne, Kāyath māne pāe.

or ' Use flattery to a Rājput, and feed a Brāhman ; give money to a Kāyasth, and kick the lower castes.' Another

Takhatsingh); or the castes which occupied them as in Chamāri, Banjāri, Baniā, Khairwār, Bamnidīh, etc. Common household utensils such as Khatolā (cot), Ghanochī (water tripod), Telai (earthern cooking pot), Jhānjh (cymbals), Mathāni (churning stick), Kathoti (watering trough), Kūnda (water basin) also serve a turn when imagination weakens. Crops too are fairly represented in village names, many of which contain the word *dhān* (rice), *e.g.*, Dhānrās, Dhaneli and Dhanorā, etc.; while Newāri, Karheni, Kakeni, Chironjpur and Karangarā are all names derived from different kinds of rice. Masurikhār is named after *masūr*, Arasia after *alsī* and Kodwā after *kodon*. There are numerous Hardis named after *hardi* (turmeric). Other names are more abstract such as the numerous Nawāgaons or Nawāpāras (new villages), the honorific or ornamental Rājā, Rānī and Lālpurs (king's, queen's or prince's towns) with many variants such as Rānierā (queen's camp), Rājakāpa (king's hamlet), Rānisāgar (queen's tank), Rānigaon, Rānibachhāli, Rānijhānp, Rājadīh, Rājadhār, and so on. The existence of the latter seems due to the fact that this District was the headquarters of the Haihaya kings for several centuries. Satīghāt (*satī* pass) recalls the memory of an ancient *satī* and Tonhichua (the witch's well) of the drowning of a witch; Sanīchardīh (Saturn's hamlet) probably suffered misfortunes attributed to Saturn's evil influence; Baihākāpa (madman's hamlet) was apparently so named because residence in that place was supposed to cause madness, or from the common native feeling that a depreciative name such as Darrābhātha (stony waste land), Daojarā (burnt by a forest fire), Nipania (waterless) or one absolutely opprobious such as Deogarhia or Bhonsripāli would bring with it freedom from the envy of malicious spirits. Rahtātod (breaker of spinning wheels) owed its name to its bumper cotton crop, which ruined the spinning wheels by excessive use. Some villages are curiously named after relatives in a family such as Māma (maternal uncle), Bhānchā (sister's son), Deorāni (younger

brother's wife), Bāpapūti (father and son) and Nānapuri (from *nāna* maternal grandfather). They are usually met with in pairs such as Māma Bhāncha. These and other pairs such as Nahnā Jotā (leather thongs for the plough yoke and neck ropes for the oxen) appear, Mr. Low thinks, to be due to a partition having taken place at some previous time or to a fanciful contrast of the size and shape of the two villages. As in the Baihar tahsīl, there is here also a curious juxtaposition of villages with identical names occurring in two distinct places, *viz.*, Belādula, Kachandā and Amlidīh. These three names occur in three contiguous villages of the Jānjgir tahsīl, and again also in three others of the adjoining Sarsiwā tract. The usual words indicating a town or village are *pur* and *gaon* (corruption of Sanskrit *grāma*) and *nār* (Gondi), but those most in use in the District are *tolā*, *pāra*, *kāpa*, *dīh*, *pāli*, and *kherwā* all of which mean a hamlet. It was usual in former times for cultivators to crowd together for protection from robbers and dacoits into single large communities. Hence the number of uninhabited hamlets was very large. In these days of public security this is no longer necessary, but a number of small settlements in the Mungelī tahsīl broke up in the big famines a few years ago from fear of dacoity. Other common terminations attached to names of villages are *tarā*, *tarai*, *sarā*, *tāl*, *bandh* and *sāgar* (tank); *dabri*, *dahrā* (pool), *nāla* (brook); *bod* (diving place), *pāni* (water), *dongar* or *dongari* (hillock), *bhātha* (waste-land), *dānr* (level ground), *munda* and *pār* (embankment); *khūta* or *koni* (corner). In the Jānjgir tahsīl there are a number of villages with a peculiar termination *aud*, probably meaning a tank as in Pisaud, Hasaud, Tanaud, Taraud, Karnaud and Rahaud.

LEADING FAMILIES.

General notice.

87. Among the leading families of the District the ten zamīndārs take the first place They are with two exceptions what are now known as Tanwars as distinguished from Kanwars or Kawars

with whom no connection is now maintained. The exceptions are the zamīndārs of Pandaria and Kanteli who are Rāj-Gonds. Eight zamīndāris occupy the mountainous tracts in the north and east of the District. Pandaria is on the north-west and Kanteli in four portions in the centre of the Mungeli tahsīl. The estates vary in size from 25 to 856 square miles containing from 44 to 359 villages. Korbā, Pendrā and Pandaria are the most important. Chhuri, Lāpha, Uprorā, Kendā, Mātin and Chāmpa are also of considerable size, but Mātin is very sparsely populated. Kanteli is the smallest of all the estates. The Chandarpur and Padampur estates also enjoyed the zamīndāri status for some time, but this has now lapsed and the proprietors have become mere mālguzārs; nevertheless the estates, which are under one proprietor, are important. The history of the zamīndārs' families has been given under the notice of each zamīndāri in the Appendix. Their traditions as well as those of other leading families of the District to be presently described would show that the original founders were as a rule adventurers. Almost all claim to have come from the north either in search of employment or on a pilgrimage to the famous Jagannāthpuri, the high road to which passed, as it still does for pedestrians, through this District. On their return journey from Jagannāth the more adventurous spirits among the pilgrims usually visited the Court at Ratanpur and by their learning in the case of Brāhmans and military service in the case of other castes acquired landed property, which kept them in the country. Some estates are merely gifts for charitable purposes. There are, however, none which may be said to be in the hands of the descendants of the original Haihayavansīs, though a few families claim connection with their successors, the Bhonslas.

Bhonsla families.

88. The Bhonsla family of Nargorā claims to be a scion of the old Rāj family of Ratanpur which is associated with the name of

Bimbāji. Bimbāji was the younger brother of the Nāgpur Rājā. The family traces its descent from one Mahāji Bhonsla, who was a distant uncle of Bimbāji and served under him as an important dignitary holding command of 1000 horse and 2000 foot. He held the village of Nargorā on *muāfi* tenure with an additional allowance of Rs. 250 per mensem. The privileges of Mahāji Bhonsla are said to have descended to his children for two generations until on the death of Chimnāji Bāpuji they were denied to his offspring owing to the general disorder that followed the ruin of the Nāgpur Rāj. The village of Nargorā was, however, allowed to be retained *muāfi* and it is still so held by the representatives of the family, though it is now split up into various small shares, the largest of which amounting to R. 0-8-0 is held by one Hirāji, the great-grandson of Chimnāji Bāpuji, who is the present *lambardār* of the village. The eldest of the survivors of this family, Raoji by name, is a Local Board member.

Another Bhonsla family that claims relationship with the same Rāj family of Ratanpur is one of which the present proprietors of the village of Chichirdā are members. This family claims to have descended from one Amar Singh, whose wife Jijī Bai was the sister of the junior Rānī of Bimbāji of Ratanpur. It is said that on account of this connection Jijī Bai was given in *muāfi* the village of Armori in the Sanjāri tahsīl of Drug by her sister the Rānī on the occasion of her *chūri*-wearing ceremony. After her husband's death Jijī Bai was given for her maintenance three more *muāfi* villages, Chichirdā being among them, with a pension of Rs. 3000 per annum. On the fall of the Nāgpur Rāj the *muāfi* right of the villages was resumed except that of Chichirdā, which was also subsequently lost on the death of Tātia Rao or Tātoba, who was adopted by Jijī Bai as her son. The pension given to Jijī Bai is still being enjoyed by the descendants of Tātia Rao, though on a reduced scale. It is liable to reduction at each successive generation, Vishwanāth Rao and his brothers

(grandsons of Tātia Rao) receiving jointly now only Rs. 128-2-0 per annum. Vishwanāth Rao's uncle Bāji Rao has renounced his claim to the hereditary pension in exchange for the whole village of Armori, which should otherwise have been equally divided between him and his nephews Vishwanāth Rao and others.

Marāthā Brāhmans.

89. The principal Marāthā Brāhman families are the mālguzārs and Shāstris of Ratanpur. The present mālguzārs of Ratanpur are three brothers, the eldest being Khande Rao. They trace their descent from one Sakhārām Gopāl about whom they tell the following story:—Sakhārām Gopāl and his brother Bāpu Gopāl were originally residents of Bālāpur-Akolā in Berār. The former was Kamaishdār of the place. During an invasion of Hyderābād by Mādho Rao Peshwā these brothers deserted the Nizām's service and went to Nāgpur to assist Chimnāji Bāpuji, the representative of the Peshwā. Later on they accompanied Chimnāji Bāpu in his invasion of Orissa, where Bāpu Gopāl died. Sakhārām was then appointed Sūbahdār of that country. He afterwards in his old age left Orissa in charge of his brother-in-law and retired to Ratanpur where he died. His son after him was Kamaishdār of different places and was appointed as such at Ratanpur which was therefore settled in his name when the Nāgpur Rāj on its fall came under the British Government. The proprietary right in the village has since uninterruptedly descended in a regular line through the members of this family. Ganpat Rao, father of the present proprietors, was a conspicuous figure in his time at Ratanpur, having been a Darbāri, a Bench Magistrate and exempt under the Arms Act. The family lives inside the Ratanpur fort where they have built their houses. The family is indebted.

The Shāstris belong to two families, the Dighraskars and the Vithālkars, both being the family priests of the Bhonslas, the former occupying a superior position to the latter. The Dighraskar family, otherwise known as the Rāj-Purohit

family, takes its name from the village Dighras in Sātāra of which its ancestors were formerly residents. It rose into prominence from its connection with the Bhonsla Rāj family of Ratanpur as their *purohits* in which capacity it served the Rāj family for many generations. One Krishna Bhat, an ancestor of this family, is said to have come to Ratanpur with Bimbāji Mahārāj to officiate as *purohit* for the Rāj family and to have been granted 22 villages in *muāfi*, 15 in Bilāspur and 7 in Raipur. But 17 of these are said to have been taken back by Bimbāji's successors and the remaining 5 still continue *muāfi* in the family. Besides these villages the family was given a *pālki* allowance in the shape of two *muāfi* villages of Ramtalā and Kandār and a cash allowance of Rs. 700 a year. But on the Nāgpur Rāj going over to the British these two villages are said to have been resumed and the cash allowance reduced to Rs. 250 per annum, a *muāfi* village being given in exchange for the balance. Over and above this a royal robe was awarded by the Rāj family to its *purohit* at every Dasahra, but this custom was discontinued under the British Government, a fixed allowance of Rs. 152 per annum being substituted. Thus the descendants of the family got a total cash allowance of Rs. 375 per annum, subject however to a reduction of 50 per cent. at each successive generation, so that the present survivors Janārdan Shāstri and Purushottam Shāstri now get only Rs. 94 each. Janārdan Shāstri is the richer of the two owning 11 mālguzāri villages in addition to his shares in the hereditary *muāfi* villages. Both are Darbāris, while Purushottam Shāstri is a Bench Magistrate also. Janārdan Shāstri is a descendant five generations and Purushottam Shāstri four generations removed from Krishna Bhat.

There is a senior branch of this family, which traces its descent from one Sakhārām Bhat, who was a nephew of Krishna Bhat being the son of his elder brother. Sakhārām Bhat was Sūbahdār of Raipur for some time and during the atter period of his life was attached to the council of the Bhonslas at Nāgpur as also was his son Krishna Bhat. The

latter's son, Vishnu Shāstri, was a Darbāri, a Bench Magistrate and exempt under the Arms Act. Raghunāth Rao and Vishwanāth Rao, sons of Vishnu Shāstri, are the present representatives of this branch. They jointly own the *muāfi* village of Mopkā besides mālguzāri villages. The former is a Darbāri and a Bench Magistrate and the latter a Tahsīldār in British service. The family has always been conspicuous for its loyalty.

The Vithalkar family derives its name from the village Vithal in Sātāra, which was the original home of its ancestors. This family was also in the service of the old Bhonsla Rājās of Ratanpur as Rāj-purohits, but being second in rank, was granted only two *muāfi* villages of Manglā and Neosā. These villages are now divided between the two branches of the family. Among the survivors of the family Govind Shāstri is well read in Shāstras and Purānas and is a Darbāri and a Bench Magistrate. His father Dāmodar Shāstri also enjoyed both these distinctions in his lifetime.

These Shāstri families continued to live on at Ratanpur until recently and left the supervision of their villages to others with the result that they all became involved in debt. They have now been compelled to bestir themselves, and have all left Ratanpur and settled on their own property.

Chhattisgarhī Brāhmans.

90. Among local Brāhmans the most important is the Pānde family of which Mohanlāl of Sakarrā, Bihārilāl of Singhri and Hīralāl of Moch are the descendants. These representatives are mutual cousins and point to one Mānik Deo nine generations back as their common ancestor. Mānik Deo was an Upper Indian belonging to Triphalā, a village near Ajodhyā. He started to Jagannāth on a pilgrimage and as the road lay as it does now through Bilāspur, he paid a visit to the Ratanpur Court on his return journey. The Rājā was pleased with his learning and appointed him Rāj-purohit, or family priest. He thus became domiciled in Ratanpur. Of the present representatives of his family Pandit Hīralāl is

a Local Board member. He is one of the more intelligent mālguzārs in the District and can be counted upon for willing co-operation with Government in public matters.

There is another Pānde family at Khedā in the Mungelī tahsīl, which owns 13 whole villages and shares in 11 vilages. It claims descent from one Adhār Pānde who came to Ratanpur from the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh over 200 years ago and received a village called Jalso in *muāfi*. Its present representative is Ripusūdan, who lives at Khedā which forms part of his landed property.

The Tiwāris of Karnod say they are immigrants from Baghelkhand. Hīralāl, Sheoprasād and Gangāprasād were three brothers who lived in mauzā Mankahri in the Rewah State. They also went to Jagannāth and while passing through Bilāspur saw enough of the District to make up their mind to settle there. So on their way back they settled in mauzā Govindā in the Jānjgir tahsīl. Subsequently the two elder brothers shifted to Chāmpa and Gangāprasād obtained from the Rājā of Nāgpur a lease of 9 villages including Govindā and Karnod and of another tract of 12 villages known as Odekera tāluk, which he afterwards lost somehow. The 9 villages still remain in his family. His eldest grandson Bālmukund is a District Council and Local Board member.

Another Tiwāri family worthy of mention is that of the Loharsi mālguzārs in the Bilāspur tahsīl. This family traces its origin to a Pandit of Upper India, who, it is said, received a grant of 52 villages from the Haihayavansī Rājā of Ratanpur. One of the descendants of the family named Gangārām left his ancestral residence at mauzā Khokrā in the Jānjgir tahsīl and settled at Loharsi, where it is said he acquired 84 villages including Loharsi. But at the time of Mr. Chisholm's settlement only 16 mālguzāri and 6 superior proprietary villages were recorded in his name and these still continue in the possession of his descendants among whom they have been divided. There are at present 21 representatives of the family of whom Kālkaprasād is the principal.

He owns two whole villages and has shares in several. His cousin Durgāprasād, who owns an equal amount of landed property, is a Local Board member. The family is notorious for the large number of its members. The original separation of the family is said to have taken place about 100 years ago during the lifetime of Thākurrām and Gayārām. There are now 9 branches of the family including in all 107 members.

Bairāgi families.

91. The owner of the Lormi tāhutdāri is a Bairāgi. His tāluk consists of 104 villages containing an area of 94 square miles. It is situated to the north of the Mungelī tahsīl. It is said that the tāluk was originally given in charity to one Baramdās Bairāgi in 1826 by the Rājā of Nāgpur. This Bairāgi died in 1853 and his *chelā* named Lakhmīdās succeeded him. There are now four surviving sons, Rāmkrishnadās and Garurdās by one wife and Bajrangdās and Lāldās by another wife. The estate has been divided among these four brothers and each is in separate possession of his share, Rāmkrishnadās being recognised by the others as head. Rāmkrishnadās is a Darbāri. Bajrangdās is a District Council member besides being a Darbāri. On the death of the father about ten years ago, the sons quarrelled on the question of the partition, and the estate was under attachment for some time for default of payment of land revenue; but it is now managed by the proprietors themselves, who have still some private debt to pay.

Mahant Gautamdās claims to be the 12th successor of the *Nihang gaddi* of Seorīnarāyan. (Among Nihang Bairāgis marriage is forbidden) He has his *math* at Seorīnarāyan. To this *math* are attached 6 revenue-free and 12 ordinary villages. The former are said to have been granted by the Rājā of Ratanpur and the latter are said to have been subsequently acquired in Samvat 1915 (1858 A.D.). Swāmi Arjundās was the *guru* or religious preceptor of Mahant Gautamdās. He is said to have died at the age of 75, after having held the *gaddi* for 44 years. He is spoken of as having been a very religious man who constructed tanks, wells, schools and

temples and planted gardens, etc. In 1877 on the occasion of the assumption of Queen Victoria of the title of Empress of India, he was granted a certificate by Government in recognition of his loyalty to the British Government. The present Mahant has done much towards the improvement of the *math* and the expansion of cultivation. He is now very old, being about 74 and has entrusted the management of his affairs to a young disciple of about 29, named Lāldās. The Mahant is a Darbāri and also exempt under the Arms Act.

The *gaddi* is traced to one Dayārāmdās who is said to have settled at Seorīnarāyan while on a pilgrimage from Gwalior and to have obtained a grant of six *muāfi* villages for the maintenance of the temple from the Rājā of Ratanpur.

The list of Mahants is as follows :—

Swāmi Dayārāmdāsji.	Swāmi Saratrāmdāsji.
Swāmi Kalyāndāsji.	Swāmi Mathurādāsji.
Swāmi Haridāsji.	Swāmi Premdāsji.
Swāmi Bālakdāsji.	Swāmi Tulsīdāsji.
Swāmi Mahādāsji.	Swāmi Arjundāsji.
Swāmi Mohandāsji.	Swāmi Gautamdāsji.

Rājput families.

92. The Chandarpur family is Kshattriya by caste. It claims its origin from one Sūraj Singh Thakurai, Rājā of Sinpos near Delhi, whose descendants are said to have originally come and taken up service under a tributary chief of the Rājā of Surguja. It is said that subsequently one of the members of the family named Bahādur Singh took up service under Abhirām Singh, Rājā of Saraikelā, and there distinguished himself by assisting an European officer in putting down a disturbance among the Kols and Santāls at Chainpur near Singbhūm. It appears that after Bahādur Singh his second son Rūp Singh rendered much assistance to the British Government in the troubled times of the Mutiny. Mr. Russell's Settlement Report of the Sambalpur District gives the following account of his career :—

'Rūp Singh was the Munsiff of the Sambalpur District 'in 1857-1858. For services rendered by him to the British

'Government before that time, when in the employ of the 'late Rājā of Sambalpur he had received the title of "Rai 'Bahādur" under a *sanad* bearing the seal and signature of 'Lord Dalhousie, Governor-General of India. After this as 'a substantial acknowledgment of his loyal services to the 'British Government during the time of the Mutiny the 'following 6 estates in the Sambalpur District were trans-'ferred to him, as sanctioned in Government of India, Home 'Department, Judicial letter No. 2149, dated the 25th Sep-'tember 1858, to the Government of Bengal, owing to the 'proprietors of the estates having joined the rebels :—

(1) Kolabira, (2) Rāmpur, (3) Barri-killa,
(4) Patkulunda, (5) Kharsal, (6) Kurkutta.

'Subsquently, after the Queen's amnesty was proclaimed, 'in 1859 the proprietors of the 6 attached estates wished to 'come back and settle down in their respective homes and 'according to a compromise sanctioned by the Government of 'Bengal in January 1862 the 6 estates were restored to their 'respective proprietors and the tāluks of Chandarpur and 'Padampur weregiven to Rai Bahādur Rūp Singh in exchange 'in zamīndāri right on payment of an annual revenue of 'Rs. 4130, which amount was fixed for a period of 40 years 'ending in 1898.' On his death in 1864 Rai Bahādur Rūp Singh was succeeded by his eldest son Hari-Har Singh, who is the present proprietor of the estate jointly with his brothers Shyām Sundar Singh and Narāyan Singh and nephews Bikram Singh and Abhirām Singh Hari-Har Singh holds the title of 'Rai Bahādur' and was granted a certificate in 1877. He is a second-class Magistrate and an Honorary Assistant Commissioner. His younger brother Thākur Shyām Sundar Singh is an Honorary Assistant District Superintendent of Police. The estate comprises 227 villages and is under the management of the Court of Wards for indebtedness. Besides this estate the family has four villages in the Bargarh tahsīl of the Sambalpur District. The family claims to be Surwar Kshattriyas of the Garg *gotra*.

Baniā families.

93. The principal Baniā family in this District is the one which traces its origin to the ancestors of one Bakhat Dāni. It is said that during the Marāthā rule these ancestors came from Upper India and settled in a village in the Chandarpur tāluk. Bakhat Dāni's son Manmadhu Sao changed his residence to mauzā Bhainso and thence to mauzā Kosā, both in the Jānjgir tahsīl, and after this Manmadhu Sao's son Shankar Sao is said to have taken up his residence at Bilāspur about 125 years ago. From here he first acquired the village of Mallār, and subsequently as his business of grain-dealing prospered, he got possession of a number of villages in the Bilāspur tahsīl. At the time of Mr. Chisholm's settlement *pattās* of 34 mālguzāri and 3 *adnā* villages were in July 1864 given to his son Maharājsai Sao. Subsequently the family acquired 14 more and is now in possession of 51 villages, one of which is a *damāmi* village. Maharājsai's eldest son Tikarām Sao was well known in the District. He was a Darbāri and exempt from the Arms Act, but lost the privileges before his death The present representatives of the family are Ahlād Sao, Ajudhyā Prasād Sao and Gendrām Sao of whom Ahlād Sao is a Darbāri and Ajudhyā Prasād Sao a Municipal member.

Khedurām Sao of Seorīnarāyan in the Jānjgir tahsīl has a large money-lending business. He owns 5 whole villages and has shares in 4 others. He has assigned one village to a Mahādeo temple in the Bilāspur tahsīl. He is a Darbāri, and before him his father Mākhan Sao enjoyed this honour. He is also exempt under the Arms Act. Khedurām Sao has a large family consisting of over 50 members who all live jointly. He is a man of considerable tact and is very popular with the residents of Seorīnarāyan and adjoining villages.

The Agarwāl Baniā family of Ratanpur claims its origin from one Chain Singh's grandfather who is said to have come from Delhi and taken up service under the then Haihayavansi Rājā of Ratanpur named Kalyān Sahai. Chain

Singh is said to be the first who permanently settled at Ratanpur, but little is known of the next three generations. The family is in possession of documents which show that Chain Singh's great-great-grandson Ghāsirām Sao carried on a money-lending business on a large scale among the zamīndārs and tālukdārs of the District and in June 1873 secured the Dīwānship of the Khairāgarh Feudatory State on a salary of Rs. 100 per mensem by paying a *nazrāna* of Rs. 1250 to the then ruling Chief. In his lifetime he acquired 25 villages as follows :—

4 mālguzāri villages in the Mandlā District.
17 mālguzāri villages in the Bilāspur tahsīl.
4 *damāmi* villages in the Bilāspur tahsīl.

He died about the year 1881 leaving behind three sons, Bhairaon Prasād, Hannurām and Rāmprasād Bhairaon Prasād added two more villages, Jhilmili and Ghuru, to the ancestral estate, so that there are now 27 villages held by the family. Hannurām was in 1888 granted a certificate by the Chief Commissioner for his liberality in helping the poor of his neighbourhood by providing them with employment during the recent scarcity. There are now 10 representatives of the family, namely, Lachhmīprasād and his two younger brothers, who live at Ratanpur, Pyārelāl and his three brothers and one nephew who live at Sis, and Balurām and his brother Harirām who live at Matiāri.

94. Tanwar families. The present representatives of the Kargi family are Khushiāl Singh and his younger brother Narrotam Singh, of whom the former is a Darbāri. They claim a common origin with the zamīndāri families of Pendrā, Kendā, Mātin and Uprorā. The two brothers jointly own the Kargi tāluk comprising 32 villages, the acquisition of which they ascribe to a deed of bravery performed by one of their ancestors. A member of the family having shot 155 tigers besides other wild animals with a favourite gun, shot his 156th tiger with the same gun when going to fetch *pān* for the Ratanpur Rājā, in

whose service he was, from a *pān bāri* where the animal lay. An old gun is still worshipped in the family and pointed out in proof of the deed. The family is heavily in debt.

Another family of Tanwars, which deserves mention, is that of which Thākur Ujiār Singh of mauzā Kori near Kotā and his younger brother Rāmnāth Singh and cousin Bhopāl Singh are the present representatives. They are the descendants of Durjan Singh, younger brother of the great-grandfather of the present minor zamīndār of Kendā. It is said that Durjan Singh was granted 12 villages for his maintenance by his elder brother, but that as he paid the *jamā* of those villages to the Rājā of Ratanpur, they were included in the *khālsa* on the advent of the British rule. Four of these villages were, it is stated, included in Government jungle at the time of Mr. Chisholm's settlement, the mālguzār at the time having declared them waste thinking that he would thereby escape assessment. There are now only 8 villages including Kori held by the family. The family is indebted. Thākur Ujiār Singh is a Darbāri and a Local Board member.

The Sarkhon family is also connected with the zamīndārs of the District. They claim to be descended from the same ancestor as the Chāmpa zamīndār. They hold the following 7 villages :—(1) Sarkhon, (2) Tendūbhāta, (3) Khairā, (4) Nailā, (5) Sonaidīhi, (6) Birkonā, (7) Pāli, of which Khairā and Pāli are held in superior proprietary right and the rest in mālguzāri right. The present representative of the family is Keshari Singh, who enjoys a seat in the Darbār.

The Pantorā family claims a common descent with the family of the Korbā zamīndār. It is said that the Pantorā tāluk, which formerly comprised 23 villages, was given as a reward to one Bāj Rai, younger brother of Moti Rai, who is the ancestor of the Korbā zamīndār's family, by a Haihayavansī Rājā of Ratanpur for military services rendered to him Four of the villages are said to have been taken away and included in the Government forest at the time of Mr. Chisholm's settlement and the remaining 19 were recorded in the name

of Bhao Singh, grandfather of the present representative Ajīt Singh. Subsequently Bhao Singh, it is said, to meet the expenses of certain litigation, took a loan of Rs. 1100 from Bishāl Singh's family at Akaltarā and mortgaged all the villages as security. The loan swelled with interest and Bhao Singh could not repay it. So in 1871 all the villages went over to the Akaltarā family and Bhao Singh had not a single village left in his family. His grandson Ajīt Singh now lives by cultivation: but his uncle Atbal Singh, who is separate from him, still holds one of the 19 villages named Baksarā for his maintenance, paying only its land revenue to the Akaltarā family.

Gond families.

95. The *muāfidār* of Mālkharodā is a Rāj-Gond and belongs to a family which is said to have originally come from Deogarh. In the Sambalpur Settlement Report of 1891 the estate is described as follows:—

'This estate is a remnant of a zamīndāri (known as 'Bargarh) which was confiscated for rebellion in 1832 and 'amalgamated with the Raigarh Feudatory State. The tract 'now known as Mālkharodā was restored to the family in '1844 on a tenure which was in 1867 made revenue free in 'perpetuity. At the settlement of 1867 it was treated as if 'not included in the zamīndāris of the District and village '*jamās* were assessed in detail in the procedure followed in 'the *khālsa*.'

The present representative of the family is a minor named Lāl Bahādur Singh. As his adoptive father Rajpāl Singh was adopted by the zamīndārin of Phuljhar, he now owns both the estates of Mālkharodā and Phuljhar in the Raipur District. He is being educated at the Raipur Rājkumār College.

The Rāj-Gond family of Birrā claims its origin from a zamīndāri family in the Chānda District It is stated that owing to family quarrels one of the descendants of the zamīndāri family, named Dhurwā, left his ancestral home and

settled at Kauria in the Raipur District, which zamīndāri still continues in his family. One of the great-grandsons of Dhurwā named Johar Rai is said to have subsequently changed his residence to mauzā Birrā in the Jānjgir tahsīl and there acquired by rendering military service to the Rājā of Ratanpur the following five *ilākas* comprising about 50 villages :—(1) Karnod, (2) Odekera, (3) Hasaud, (4) half of Kikirdā, and (5) Seor. But at the time of Mr. Chisholm's settlement only 16 villages were recorded in the name of Johar Rai's grandson Umed Singh, *viz.*, 10 in mālguzāri right and 6 in superior proprietary right. These villages still continue in the possession of the family. The present representative of the family is Madan Mohan Singh, a minor of about 13 years of age. The family claims to be Rāj-Gond of the Garhā-Mandlā stock. It is connected by blood with the Phuljhar and Kauria zamīndāri families in the Raipur District and by marriage with many of the Gond chiefs and zamīndārs.

Other families.

96. The family of the Akaltarā mālguzārs traces its origin to Sardār Singh and Pīla Singh, who were two brothers. These brothers are said to have been originally residents of Mewār in the Jodhpur State of Rājputāna. It is said that the brothers while on a pilgrimage to Jagannāth took service with the Rājā of Surguja and afterwards with the Rājā of Ratanpur. They claim mauzā Pondi as their original village. At the time of the first settlement the representative of the family was Sardār Singh and he was in possession of 6 villages of which he obtained *pattās* from Major Elliot in 1858. Subsequently, it is said, Sardār Singh took up the business of money-lending and considerably enlarged his estate by purchasing 45 villages including a *damāmi* village. Thus, the estate now in the possession of the family consists of 51 villages mostly situated in the Jānjgir tahsīl. Sardār Singh and his younger brother Garur Singh were Darbāris and the former also enjoyed an exemption under the Arms Act. Of the present leading representatives of the family Manmohan Singh,

grandson of Sardār Singh, is a Darbāri and Bishāl Singh, son of Garur Singh, is exempt under the Arms Act. The family claims to be Sūryavansī Rānā Chhatris of Bharadwāj *gotra*; but they are generally known as Daraihās[1] which is said to be a corruption of Dargainyas meaning residents of Dargaon in the Raipur District where some people of this caste are said to have gone and settled.

The most prominent of the Muhammadan families is that of Akbar Khān. It traces its descent from one Muhammad Khān, the great-grandfather of Akbar Khān. Muhammad Khān, and after his death, his son Rahīm Khān are said to have been employed as Sūbahdārs of troops under the Bhonsla Rāj of Nāgpur. It is said that as a reward for good services rendered to the Rāj while in charge of a military garrison at Bilāspur, Rahīm Khān received the grant of Dighori and Okhar circles, which comprised 38 villages. He retained the villages until they were actually settled in his name by the British Government. On his death the estate was divided between his two sons, Abdul Hamīd Khān and Abdul Majīd Khān, who added some more mālguzāri villages and a *damāmi* village. Akbar Khān, the present representative of the family, is the son of Abdul Hamīd Khān and holds the whole estate consisting of 48 villages. He has a seat in the Darbār. The family has now settled in the village of Sargaon in the Mungelī tahsīl. It is somewhat indebted.

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[1] Mr. Wills states that the name is really derived from *dāri*, a kept-woman.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE.

SOILS.

Soils.

97. The soils of the Bilāspur District vary between two extremes which are locally known by the names of *kanhār* and *matāsi*. *Kanhār* is a deep clay soil of blue-black or brown-black colour which is said to be geologically composed of the detritus of trap. *Matāsi* is a light-coloured soil varying in colour from white to brownish-yellow which is generally supposed to be formed from the detritus of crystalline rock. Between these two extremes there is a middle soil generally called *dorsā* or *domattā* which means soil of two tinges (*do-rasā*) or composed of two kinds of earth (*do-mattā*). As its name implies it is a mixture of *kanhār* and *matāsi* and for settlement purposes has been divided into two classes. First grade *dorsā* is a dark-brown clay soil which in many respects resembles *kanhār* which predominates over *matāsi* in its composition. Second-grade *dorsā* is a light brown soil in the composition of which *matāsi* predominates over *kanhār*. Besides these principal soils there is a small area of very inferior soil called *bhātā*. The soil takes its name, which literally means 'a ridge,' from the position in which it is found. It consists of a slight sprinkling of sandy soil over gravel and will grow nothing but sesamum and the lightest kinds of millet. On the banks of the numerous rivers and streams which drain the District are found deposits of alluvial soil known here, as elsewhere, by the name of *kachhār*. This soil consists of a mixture of clay and sand. In its better form in which clay predominates over sand it is known as *pāl kachhār*. In its worse form where sand largely predominates over clay, the soil is known as *patpar kachhār*. *Kanhār* and first-grade *dorsā* will grow any kind of crop,

and when sown with rice are usually double-cropped with linseed or *rabi* pulses. Second-grade *dorsā* will grow rice, linseed, *rabi* pulses, the lighter millets and castor, sesamum, arhar (*Cajanus Indicus*), and occasionally wheat as single crops. When sown with rice it will in good years, or in low-lying positions, bear a second crop of linseed or of the lighter *rabi* pulses. *Matāsi* will grow nothing but rice, the lighter millets, and sesamum, but in good years or with irrigation its crops of rice are excellent; it is, however, very susceptible to damage from any diminution of the normal rainfall. *Pāl kachhār* is principally suitable for garden-crops and groves. *Patpar kachhār* is principally found in the beds of streams where it is generally cropped with melons and sweet potatoes. Mungelī, the western tahsīl, is by far the most fertile of the three, and almost entirely consists of *kanhār* and first-grade *dorsā*. The eastern tahsīl of Jānjgir principally consists of *matāsi* and second-grade *dorsā*. The central tahsīl of Bilāspur forms the point of transition between the two systems of soil. In its western half the formation of the soil approximates to that of Mungelī, and in its eastern half to that of Jānjgir.

STATISTICS OF CULTIVATION.

Statistics of cultivation.

98. During the last few years the progress of settlement operations in this District has caused much dislocation of the work of the land records staff, and the statistics which will give the best idea of the cropping of the District are those of 1904-05, a normal year before attestation caused any interference with the ordinary routine. The District as now constituted comprises a total area of 4,867,232 acres of which 20 per cent. is comprised in the unsurveyed forests of the zamīndāris, and an additional 7 per cent. is included in the Government forest reserves. The balance of 3,555,668 acres represents the area for which agricultural returns exist. Of this area 3,301,300 acres or 93 per cent. are

culturable and 1,767,265 acres or 50 per cent. were in 1904-05 occupied for cultivation. The large unoccupied area is to be found in the northern zamīndāris of which even the area surveyed largely consists of forest. The *khālsa* of the District is mostly denuded of forest and is densely populated and closely cultivated; and in the year 1905-06 (separate statistics for the *khālsa* in 1904-05 are not available) the area there occupied for cultivation amounted to 1,218,222 acres or 68 per cent. of the total area, and 72 per cent. of the culturable area (1,688,999 acres). In 1904-05 of the total occupied area of the District 1,521,207 acres or 86 per cent. were actually cropped, and of the net cropped area 324,080 acres or 21 per cent. were double-cropped.

CROPS.

Statistics of crops.

99. Rice is by far the most important crop of the District and enormously outweighs all others. In 1904-05 it covered 1,025,141 acres or 67 per cent. of the net cropped area. Next in importance *sed longo intervallo* comes kodon (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*) which in 1904-05 covered 140,125 acres or 9 per cent. of the net cropped area. This prolific millet has grown considerably in popularity since the famine years, as it requires little rain, and is looked on as a sort of insurance against the failure of the rice crop. It will grow in any soil from *kanhār* to *bhātā* and is generally sown as a mixture with arhar (*Cajanus Indicus*) in the better soils, and with sesamum in the poorer soils. In *kanhār* and first-grade *dorsā* it is largely used as a rotation-crop for wheat, and in these soils 100 times the seed is looked upon by the people as an averagely good yield. Wheat in 1904-05 covered 103,893 acres or 7 per cent. of the net cropped area. It is of most importance in the Mungelī tahsīl and in the west of the Bilāspur tahsīl. In the Mungelī tahsīl the area under wheat in 1904-05 amounted to 64,786 acres or 18 per cent. of the net cropped area. The balance of the net cropped area is mainly sown with linseed

and miscellaneous *rabi* pulses principally urad (*Phaseolus radiatus*), tiurā (*Lathyrus sativus*), *baturā* (*Pisum sativum*), masūr (*Ervum lens*) and gram. The areas so cropped were in 1904-05 respectively 153,927 acres and 297,670 acres. But a very large proportion of these varieties is grown as a second crop after rice, and an exact estimate of the area under each of them grown as a single crop cannot be given. It may be taken however that linseed and miscellaneous pulses between them cover practically the whole of the area double-cropped. Between them therefore in 1904-05 they covered as single crops approximately 127,517 acres or 8 per cent. of the net cropped area. The area under linseed and miscellaneous *rabi* fluctuates largely from year to year, as they are, whether grown as single or double crops, largely dependent on good rain at the end of September or the beginning of October. In 1905-06 when the monsoon ceased early the total area under linseed and *rabi* pulses was only 20,019 acres as compared with 451,597 acres in 1904-05.

Methods of cultivation. Rice.

100. Rice is almost universally sown broadcast, transplantation being only practised in a few localities such as Ratanpur, Mallār and Bilāspur itself, and there only to a very small extent and by exceptionally enterprising cultivators. There are three methods of sowing it. The first is locally known as *khurrā* sowing, or sowing in land which has been ploughed once or twice before the monsoon breaks. The second is known as *batar* sowing, or sowing in land which is ploughed for the first time when the monsoon breaks. In both of these methods the seed is broadcasted, in the case of *khurrā* sowings, over ground which has been prepared before the rains break, and in the case of *batar* sowing, over ground which is ploughed immediately before sowing once or twice according to the amount of grass and weeds in the field. In rare cases when the field is exceptionally free from weeds the seed is scattered over unploughed land in *batar* sowings. Whatever be the state of the ground before the seed is

scattered over it, the latter is ploughed in by a final ploughing. The third method is called sowing in *lehī.* It is adopted for late sowing when the ground has been well saturated by the first fall of the monsoon. It consists in ploughing up the wet ground with an inch or two of water standing on it into thick mud until all the water is absorbed in the soil. Then seed, which has been made to germinate artificially by being soaked for 24 hours in a pot full of water and then covered over inside the house with a heap of straw to exclude light and produce warmth, is sown broadcast over the field. In this case the seed is not ploughed in. Sowing after one or two ploughings in *batar* is the method most generally adopted, because, in this District, where rice land forms so large a proportion of the total cropped area, few even of the wealthier tenants and mālguzārs have sufficiently frequent opportunities of ploughing their land before the rains break to be able to sow all of it in *khurrā.* The latter method when it is practicable is by far the most profitable, owing to the facts that the upturned earth becomes more friable through the action of the air and the sun, the manure becomes more perfectly amalgamated with the loosened soil, the rain, when it comes, more rapidly permeates it, and the seed can be got into the ground more speedily than if the other methods are employed. *Lehī* sowing is only adopted in fields which cannot be sown promptly, and is avoided as much as possible, because the plants so sown are very apt to be drowned out by a heavy fall of rain soon after sowing-time. Whichever method of sowing is adopted, the rice plants, about four or five weeks after sowing time, when they have attained a height of a foot or so, are thinned by driving a plough through the field at right angles to the lines which have been made by the ploughings preliminary to sowing. This method of thinning is locally known as *biāsi.* It requires a fairly large amount of water in the field, and is usually practised just after the second heavy fall of rain at the end of July or the beginning of August. Its performance

at the proper time is of critical importance to the rice crop, and its postponement owing to unseasonable want of rain is very detrimental. After the plants have fully germinated and until *biāsi* has been performed, the plough-cattle during their spells of rest are allowed to graze on them, as aiding in the process of thinning. A few days after *biāsi* has been performed, when the plants are beginning to revive from the uprooting which they have received, a log of wood, known locally as a *kopar*, which is yoked to a pair of oxen or buffaloes, and on which the driver stands, is dragged across the fields. The object of this is to press the roots exposed by *biāsi* back into the earth so that they can send up more shoots, to level the irregularities of the ground caused by the plough, and to submerge the weeds which have grown up with the rice, but which, unlike it, cannot stand immersion. When all these operations have been completed, a certain amount of the water in the field is allowed to run off, and the crop requires a short spell of comparatively fine weather to recover from the drastic treatment which it has received. When the water has been reduced to the proper level, the field sluices are blocked up in readiness for the mid-August fall and are not re-opened except in the case of very excessive rain, or for the purpose of irrigation, till the last half of October. Throughout the last half of August and the first half of September the cultivator likes as much rain as he can get and considers four good falls essential. During this period the rice is weeded twice or even oftener. To produce a full crop another good fall at the beginning of October is required after which the rice needs comparatively fine weather to ripen. The critical periods are the end of July, the latter half of August, and from the middle of September to the middle of October. At these periods good rain is essential, and any diminution of the supply of water at once results in a diminished outturn.

The earlier varieties of rice are reaped at the end of October, but the harvesting of the heavier rices goes on in

a good year until well into December. The cultivator manures as much of his rice-land as he possibly can with cattle-dung and ashes, for manure is essential to a good rice crop. The bulk of it is employed in the fields composed of *kanhār* and *dorsā*, which require much more regular manuring than *matāsi*, which will give very fair results with one manuring in three years or so. The usual allotment of manure by a cultivator in average circumstances is about four or five cartloads to the acre. This allotment is really too small for the heavier soils, and a man who has plenty of cattle or a small holding will apply ten or more cartloads to the acre.

101. Irrigation is naturally most frequently resorted to in the east of the District where light soils predominate. It is of practically no importance in the Mungelī tahsīl, where the black clay in normal years requires no artificial supply of water, and where the level character of the ground renders the sources of supply unable to protect more than a very limited area. The sources of supply are almost entirely tanks, usually of no great size; and the value of irrigation in this District principally lies in the possibility of rectifying uneven distribution of the rainfall. The area which can be considered as protected against a general failure of the monsoon is trifling. The tanks are usually provided with an outer reservoir called a *paithu*, from which the water passes into the tank through a cut in the upper embankment of the latter. The effect of this reservoir is to increase the volume of water held up, and to enable some of the silt to settle before the water passes into the source of the village supply of drinking water. When irrigation is necessary, water is first drawn off from the *paithu* and allowed to run into the fields on the highest level which can be reached. When these have been irrigated and no more water can be made to run out of the sluice, the tank itself is breached at a lower level and the water is allowed to run

Irrigation.

into the fields which can be covered thence. Unless there are two or three tanks in a village the breaching of the tank itself is avoided, if at all possible, in order to prevent the village supply of drinking water from running short in the hot weather. In many cases the tank is the only source of supply, and, if it fails, water has to be brought from long distances for household purposes, and the cattle have to be driven a long way to drink. There is also a strong religious prejudice against the breaching of a tank by a man who has made it himself. A few of the fields immediately adjoining and above a tank, reservoir, or pond, are sometimes irrigated by a basket-lift called a *chhāpa*. This consists of a basket slung between two pairs of ropes, which are held by two men sitting facing one another across the sluice, who dip the basket into the water and then swing it up on to the higher level. In one or two places near rivers, where the water level is close to the surface of the soil, temporary wells are used for irrigating rice, but such a practice is very rare, and the sinking of wells is usually left to Marārs for the cultivation of garden-crops. The only sources of irrigation of any importance besides tanks are nullahs, which in suitable places are dammed by the people, who run the water so held up into any fields near the nullah which it will reach. They usually have to make recourse to the basket-lift to get all the water that they want.

The area irrigated fluctuates considerably from year to year. It depends partly on the necessity for irrigation and secondly on the ability of the tanks to supply water when it is required. In 1904-05, when the early monsoon was good and the tanks filled well, but when a long break in September and October necessitated fairly free recourse to irrigation in the tracts where light soils predominate, the recorded irrigated area of the District as now constituted was 104,423 acres. In 1905-06, when, though irrigation was badly wanted, the shortage of the early monsoon prevented he tanks from filling, the recorded area was only 60,319

acres. In the good year of 1906-07 there was little necessity for irrigation and the total area irrigated was only 9910 acres. In 1907-08, when, though the early monsoon was above average, there was more necessity than in 1904-05 for irrigation in September, the irrigated area expanded to 140,969 acres. The recorded figures are probably a little below the mark as the patwāri staff are rather careless in recording irrigation. About 15 per cent. of the area of rice may be taken as capable of irrigation when the early monsoon is sufficient to fill the village tanks. The normal number of irrigation wells, most of which are temporary, is about 3000 and they normally irrigate about 1000 acres or about 0·33 of an acre per well. Most of the area is under sugarcane or garden-crops.

'The only Government tanks constructed in the Bilās-'pur District are two minor tanks, Hardi and Dhānras near 'Lormi, while a third is now under construction at Barpāli 'near Akaltarā. In addition to these, four village tanks have 'been improved on the grant-in-aid system. The District is 'however rich in potential schemes; canal projects have been 'investigated from the Hasdo and Son rivers, and storage 'works investigated are those of the Maniāri, Kathotia, Agar, 'Līlāgar, Khārun, and Rāhan situated where those rivers 'debouch from the hills; in addition the Khaija lake about 12 'miles north of Chāmpa near the right bank of the Hasdo, and 'sites for several minor tanks have been made the subject of 'enquiry. Some of the major schemes are exceedingly 'promising; the Maniāri reservoir (a magnificent storage 'basin) would command the Doab between the Agar and 'Arpā rivers, about 1100 square miles, supplemented if 'necessary by the Agar or Kathotia projects and the Hasdo '(whose mean discharge in September is 17,600 cubic feet 'per second and in January 663 cubic feet per second) and 'Son canal would command the whole area below the Kanji 'and the eastern Son, an area of some 500 square miles. A 'project has also been partially investigated in the Kawardhā

'State on the Utani nullah, a tributary of the Hānp river which 'commands some 150 square miles. It has not been possible 'to investigate these schemes fully as the Government of 'India considers that Chhattisgarh is sufficiently provided for 'in the future by the Tandulā and Mahānadi canals, and has 'declined to continue the spending of further sums in the 'investigation of major projects in Bilāspur. Meantime the 'rivers are being gauged and hydrological data collected for 'the future. It is not yet possible to gauge the future of 'irrigation in Bilāspur from experience, as the Hardi tank 'is the only one which has been working for more than one 'year, but on the higher lying lands at any rate the people seem 'to be quite alive to the advantages of an assured water-supply 'for irrigation. *Kharīf* in 1907-08 was freely irrigated when 'the necessity called for it, the people willingly paying Rs. 2 'per acre water rate. *Rabi* irrigation is in its earliest 'infancy, but signs are not wanting that the cultivation of 'irrigated wheat and sugarcane is likely to expand.'[1]

Double-cropping.

102. When the District gets its normal quantity of October rain an after-crop of linseed and *rabi* pulses is grown in most of the *kanhār* and *dorsā* I rice fields, and in *dorsā* II in level and low-lying positions. The method of sowing is very simple. The seed is scattered broadcast among the standing rice plants just before or just after the time, about the third week of October, when the water which remains standing in the fields is finally drained away. The amount of moisture necessary for sowing varies with the kind of seed sown. Linseed and urad (*Phaseolus radiatus*) cannot stand soaking, and are sown after the water has been run off; *baturā* (*Pisum sativum*), gram and masūr (*Ervum lens*) are generally sown a few hours before the water is run off; and tiurā (*Lathyrus sativus*) which has a very hard husk, is allowed to soak in the fields for 24 hours before the sluices are opened. It is at this juncture that one of the uses of the *kopar* makes itself

[1] From a note by Mr. P. J. C. Adams, Irrigation Department.

manifest, for in a field where it has been properly applied the water runs off evenly and finds no depressions in which to settle and rot the seed. The after-crop grows up for about a month or so in the shade of the rice plants, which protect the young *rabi* seedlings from the rays of the hot October sun. After the rice is reaped in November the plants are strong enough to make their own way, and the heat of the sun has been reduced to proportions suitable for the spring crops. This second crop after rice, which is locally known as *uterā*, considerably enhances the value of the heavier soils, for it entails no labour except that involved in sowing and harvesting (which latter operation in the case of the pulses merely consists in gathering the plants by hand, no cutting being necessary), and is generally estimated to amount to 20 per cent. of the general productiveness of the fields where it is sown. If it be sown after good October rain it will give results with no further fall, and with one good fall of winter rain will give a practically full crop. In some tracts, principally round Ratanpur, the better classes of rice-land in low-lying positions are sometimes reploughed after the rice has been reaped, and are resown with wheat and barley. Crops so sown, however, are not included by the people within the term *uterā*, which is restricted to crops sown without reploughing. The latter are obviously precarious and depend entirely on seasonable October rain. Irrigation as practised in Chhattīsgarh, although it may save the rice-crop, is of no use for *uterā*, if the field to which it is applied has dried up before the water comes to it. If some moisture remains in the field which irrigation can supplement, it is of benefit to the *uterā*, but even then is of very partial efficacy as a substitute for October rain. With natural rainfall the whole of the village lands get water at the same time, and therefore there is no percolation of water from one watered block to the expanse of dry land surrounding it. Furthermore, the water-supply given by natural rain is much more plentiful and has time to soak deep into the ground; and

while the rain is actually falling, the sky is overcast and there is little loss of moisture from evaporation. By recourse to irrigation on the other hand a man does not get his field full of standing water for more than a very short period hardly ever more than 24 hours. After that the water has to be run off to give the field below it its share; and all the time that the water is standing in the field it is by day exposed to the rays of the sun (for this reason the water is usually passed on from one field to another in the evening). Hence the area sown with second crops fluctuates largely from year to year (*e.g.*, in 1904-05 a year of fairly plentiful rain there were in this District 324,080 acres double-cropped, whereas in 1905-06, a year when there was practically no rain at all in October, the area was only 205,269 acres).

Kodon.

103. Besides rice the principal autumn crop is kodon (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*), which is largely used by the poorer classes as a food-grain and, except sesamum, and occasionally urad (*Phaseolus radiatus*), is practically the only crop which *bhātā* and unembanked *matāsi* will grow. It is also grown largely in the better soils in poor positions, and in wheat-land is used with arhar (*Cajanus Indicus*) as a rotation-crop to prevent the exhaustion of the soil. It is sown in the latter half of June or the beginning of July concurrently with the rice-sowings. It is broadcasted over land which has been ploughed once or twice after the rains break, and is then ploughed in by driving the plough over it in a direction at right angles to the original furrows. In light soils it is usually admixed with sesamum, and in the heavier soils with arhar, the seed of which is mixed with that of the kodon, and which require no additional cultivation. About three to five weeks from germination the kodon is thinned by raking it over with a sort of harrow called a *datāri*, which consists of a log studded with eight or nine teeth, which is yoked to a pair of oxen. The effect of this process is to remove the congestion caused by the luxuriant growth of

the broadcasted seed, and to uproot a large proportion of the weeds which grow up with the crop. The plants which survive the process benefit by the additional space and throw out a large number of fresh shoots. After thinning, the kodon crop is weeded once or twice in the latter part of August and the beginning of September, and then requires no further attention till harvest-time. It is reaped in October or November accordingly as it belongs to the earlier or the later variety. Sesamum of the *kharīf* variety ripens slightly earlier than kodon and is reaped early in October, but arhar flowers in the cold weather and is not harvested till February or March. Sesamum when grown pure as a *kharīf* crop is sown broadcast in the same manner as kodon at the end of June or the beginning of July when the cultivator has completed his rice and kodon sowings. It is not weeded or thinned. When grown as a *rabi* crop it is sown from the beginning to the middle of August and is harvested in December.

Wheat.

104. The principal spring crop is wheat. It is sown from the end of October till early in December in ground which, when unembanked, has usually been ploughed three or four times before the final ploughing with which the seed is sown. The cultivator begins to plough his wheat-land in the latter half of August when he has completed the thinning of his rice and kodon. He will usually give the land two more ploughings at the end of September or the beginning of October and then gives it a final ploughing at the end of October or in November when the seed is sown. If a field is specially weedy it may be given as many as five preliminary ploughings. The seed is sown in lines at the time of the final ploughing by being dropped through a hollow bamboo, called a *torā*, which is inserted in a hole drilled through the *nās* or wooden share of the plough. This bamboo stands upright between the oxen and the ploughman, and is surmounted by a bottomless wooden cup, called a *pailā*, which fits over the top of it, and into which a second man

who walks beside the plough drops the seed. The latter falls into the furrow behind the toe of the share, the heel of which passes over it; and on the withdrawal of the heel of the share, as the plough passes on, the earth drops back over the seed. Wheat is never manured or weeded, and after sowing until it is harvested it receives no further attention beyond watching and occasionally, in fields near the road, fencing with thorns, to protect it from cattle and wild animals. To the writer's knowledge there is only one place in the District where wheat is irrigated after sowing (and there the practice is an innovation consequent on the construction of a Government irrigation reservoir), though occasionally a dry field near a tank is watered before sowing-time to give the moisture necessary for germination. As the seed is sown in furrows which get down to the moisture in the ground after it sinks below the surface, irrigation is able to produce successful germination, although the moisture so given would not be enough if the seed were sown as *uterā* in a field which was previously dry. A common form of agricultural improvement is the construction of embankments round wheat-fields, which hold up water till sowing-time, when it is drained off. These embankments give the field which they enclose a double advantage over unembanked land: (1) the moisture necessary for germination is available for a much longer period than in unembanked land, and (2) the standing water renders the ground much softer than it would be if unembanked, and, if the water can be maintained at a sufficient depth, the growth of weeds is prevented. Consequently the field requires many fewer ploughings (one or two as compared with four to six in unembanked land). If there be sufficient moisture at sowing-time, wheat only wants one good fall of rain in December to give a very fair outturn. If it gets another fall in January or at the beginning of February it should give a full crop, unless unseasonable rain towards the end of February produce rust or damage be caused by hail. The crop is reared in the first three weeks of March.

105. The principal spring crops besides wheat are linseed, castor, and *rabi* pulses such as urad (*Phaseolus radiatus*), *baturā* (*Pisum sativum*), masūr (*Ervum lens*) and gram. The ground in which these crops are to be sown is usually given two preliminary ploughings (or in the case of linseed three) in August and September. If moisture is plentiful and near the surface, linseed, *baturā*, masūr, and castor are usually sown broadcast and then ploughed in like kodon and rice. If the moisture is beginning to sink into the ground and the surface soil is drying, they are sown in lines like wheat. The broadcast method is preferred as saving labour, for one man can let his plough stand while he scatters the seed, and then plough the latter in; whereas, if the crop is sown in lines, a second man is required to drop the seed into the *torā*. Gram is a crop which can be sown till well on into December, and is therefore usually left till after the others have been put into the ground, and is sown in lines like wheat. Castor is usually sown at the beginning of October, linseed in the middle of October, and *baturā* and masūr early in November. Wheat and barley can be sown throughout November and even early in December. The usual allotment of the principal kinds of seed to an acre is approximately as follows:—

Linseed, castor, and *rabi* pulses.

	Seers.
Rice	32
Kodon	3½
Sesamum	3½
Wheat	44
Linseed	3½

106. Sugarcane is a crop of some importance in the east of the District. It is usually grown in plots of land, permanently set apart for the purpose and enclosed by mud walls, which are locally called *barchhās*. There are usually two of these (sometimes more) in each village where sugarcane is regularly grown,

Sugarcane.

which are placed near to the tank or river which supplies the large amount of water necessary for the crop. The latter is usually sown every other year, or every third year, the *barchhā* being usually cropped in the intermediate years with urad or sometimes allowed to lie fallow. The preparation of the ground for sugarcane begins in January when the *barchhā* is irrigated. It is then thoroughly ploughed from six to eight times, after which any clods which remain are pounded up by the head of the one-pronged pick called a *kudāli*, which serves as a substitute for the spade in this country. When the whole *barchhā* has been reduced to fine tilth, broad longitudinal lines or *chānchīs* are made about a foot apart by a plough behind the share of which is attached a triangular piece of wood which has the effect of widening the furrows. Then lateral channels for the distribution of the water are made at right angles to the *chānchīs* in the same manner. Up to this point all the labour involved in breaching the tank, ploughing, and forming the *chānchīs* and water-channels, has been performed jointly by all those who intend to grow cane. Henceforward each man attends to his own plot within the *barchhā*, although all jointly contribute the labour involved in irrigation, or, later in the season when the water in the tank runs low, the payment of the labourers who ply the basket-lift. Each man heaps the earth of his plot into small mounds called *dhūrūs* between the ongitudinal lines, leaving spaces, of course, for the lateral water-channels. The plots are then manured, about 12 cartloads being allowed to the acre. After this the *barchhā* is again irrigated, and when the earth in the *māndās* (which is the name given to the sections of the *chānchīs* which lie between each pair of lateral water-channels) is thoroughly puddled into mud, short pieces of cane, each having three eyes, are planted in the mud, the allotment being about 10,000 to the acre. About a fortnight or three weeks later, when the plants have sprouted and the earth has dried, the cracks are filled up with manure and the *barchhā* is again irrigated.

When the soil has again partially dried for a day or two the earth of the intermediate mounds or *dhūrūs* is raked about the roots of the plants. By this time it is the end of February. The crop is twice irrigated in March, and towards the end of that month the earth is banked up about the plants. In April, when resort to the *chhāpa* has generally to be made, the crop is watered twice, in May three times, and in June twice or three times according to the date on which the monsoon breaks. After each watering the earth is banked up about the plants, and at the end of June manure is applied for the third time. During the rains the lower leaves of the plants are coiled round the canes, and after the end of the monsoon the *barchhā* is irrigated four or five times according to necessity. The crop usually ripens in January and is cut in that month or in February. *Barchhās* are held on various tenures. Usually the *barchhā* is either held jointly by the mālguzār and the village community who cultivate cane in partnership, the members of the partnership varying from year to year, and no allocation of plots being made for longer than the current year; or else the strips of land cultivated by each man within the *barchhā* are held by him in perpetuity and are included in his regular holding. Sometimes the *barchhā* is the mālguzār's *sīr*, part of which he lets in small strips to those tenants who wish to grow cane for the year in which sugarcane is grown, and is in the intermediate years cropped with urad by the mālguzār alone. Whichever of these three tenures prevails, all the work of ploughing and irrigation is, as has been said above, undertaken by all the cultivators of sugarcane jointly, as the strip which each man holds is too small to admit of his ploughing it separately.

Vegetables.

107. Market-gardening is of some importance in the Bilāspur tahsīl, but the various sorts of vegetables which are produced vary so much in treatment that it is not possible to give a full account of the methods adopted in any reasonable space.

The ground for garden crops is ploughed as often as possible in the earlier part of the rains to free it from grass and weeds, and the seed of most of the earlier varieties of vegetable is sown in nurseries at the end of August and the beginning of September. The seedlings are transplanted at the end of September, and are irrigated after the close of the rains as occasion requires (usually twice a week) by means of a lift from a temporary well or from the bed of a stream. The construction of the lift and the division of the plots into chess-board squares is too common throughout India to require special description. Fresh sowings go on throughout the cold weather, and gardening ceases towards the end of the hot weather. In villages where garden cultivation is not well established, a mālguzār or well-to-do tenant often, after the rice crop has been cut, gives one of his rice-fields, which is situated conveniently for irrigation, to a Marār for garden cultivation on condition of being supplied with vegetables.

CATTLE.

Agricultural cattle.

108. The agricultural cattle of this District as shown in the returns for 1905-06 (the year nearest to that from the returns of which the statistics in this chapter have been taken) amounted to 919,214 head, of which 618,964 were owned in the *khālsa* and 300,250 in the zamīndāris. It is thus evident that the cattle are most numerous just where there is the least pasturage; and the average area of waste suitable for grazing per head of cattle in the *khālsa* was in 1905-06 0·76 of an acre as compared with 3·77 acres in the zamīndāris (apart from the large unsurveyed area which exists in the latter tract). To this circumstance, coupled with the persistent refusal of the people to grow crops that are useful for fodder, are due the stunted growth and miserable stamina of the Chhattīsgarh cattle which are a by-word throughout the Provinces. For the greater part of the open season they are turned out daily to graze in the charge of the village herdsman or *bardihā*, and in the open parts of the District pick

up what sustenance they can from the stunted grass which grows on the village waste and the embankments of the rice-fields, and from the stubble which has been left in the fields after the crops have been reaped. In the hot weather, when there is practically no natural pasture to be had, they are given at night time a quantity of rice-straw just sufficient to support life upon. Stall-feeding worth the name is practically unknown. In the rains the area available for grazing is restricted to the village waste, and although the latter gives a better yield of grass (unless, as happens in some of the clay-soil villages, the going and coming of the cattle tread it up into a slimy morass in which grass cannot grow), the heavy labour demanded from them at a time when their vitality has been sapped by the starvation which they have undergone in the hot weather results in very great mortality, apart from the ravages of the various forms of disease (principally rinderpest and anthrax) which annually sweep off thousands of cattle in Chhattīsgarh. The infected animals are never segregated, and consequently when an epidemic gets a footing in a village it runs through the whole herd; and it is a matter for astonishment that so many cattle survive rather than that so many succumb. In the past year (1908) it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that a quarter of the cattle of the open parts of the District have died. Despite the pecuniary loss so entailed which, excluding young stock from consideration and valuing adult cattle at the very moderate estimate of Rs. 7 a head, must in the past year have amounted to about eight lakhs of rupees, the bulk of the open portion of the District is so denuded of jungle and is so far from the forests of the Government reserves and the zamīndāris, that the people are unable to send away their cattle to healthier surroundings and adequate pasturage. Such cattle as go to the reserves from any distance are generally the property of well-to-do village proprietors, or of professional herdsmen who remain in the forests for most of the year. At the present revision

of settlement the experiment is being tried of reserving for grazing, by a clause in the administration paper of each village, an irreducible minimum of waste. This measure is not an innovation, but is a reversion to the custom by which, before land tenures were stereotyped by the British administration, a definite share of the village lands was set apart for 'Lakshmi'[1] at each periodical redistribution. But this can at best be only a palliative, and improvement can only be looked for from the spread of enlightenment, and an appreciation of the advisability of devoting a small proportion of the land now restricted to the profitable crops of rice and wheat to the growth of staples like juār which afford good fodder. The main reason for the failure to grow such crops is the laziness of the Chhattīsgarhī cultivator, whose objection to juār is that it takes too much trouble to watch and protect from the ravages of birds. The low pitch of the present rent-rate which in the Mungelī tahsīl, the best part of the District, amounts to about 11 annas an acre and will after the revision of settlement be still considerably less than R. 1 an acre, renders the cultivator apt not to take his means of livelihood as seriously as he might, and it will probably be a very long time before the pressure of the rent-rate stimulates him to adopt less wasteful methods. As might be anticipated the value of the cattle of the District is not great. The average price of a pair of oxen is about Rs. 25 and of a pair of buffaloes about Rs. 40. The bulls, bullocks, and cows of the District are mostly bred locally, but there is a large import trade in buffaloes which are brought down annually in large herds by Basdewā drovers from the Saugor District and the Rewah State *viâ* the Mandlā District, and sold at the important cattle markets of Gondkhāmi in the Mungelī tahsīl, Ganiārī and Bilāspur in the Bilāspur tahsīl, and Bamnidih in the Jānjgir tahsīl, at which thousands of buffaloes (many of them, of course, locally bred) change hands in the course of the year.

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1 See the description of the custom of *lākhabāta* in Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER V.

LOANS, PRICES, WAGES, MANUFACTURES, TRADE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

LOANS.

Government Loans.

109. Expenditure on agricultural improvements is chiefly directed towards the construction of tanks and field-embankments. But the cultivators do not build large and strong embankments for their rice-fields so regularly as in Chānda and Sambalpur. In former times the custom of *lākhabāta* or the periodical redistribution of the fields of the village among all the cultivators with a view to obtaining equal advantages from the land to each in turn was regularly followed in Chhattīsgarh. The original idea underlying this custom must have been that the ryots of a village were, as it were, shareholders in the return which was obtainable from the soil; and the idea of private property in land had not yet been devised. But the consequence of the custom was that the fields of any individual did not lie in a compact block but were scattered throughout the village, and this state of affairs was an almost fatal obstacle to the improvement of holdings. With the increase in the value of property, the custom of *lākhabāta* has now largely fallen into abeyance. Except in years of scarcity the amounts advanced under the Land Improvement Loans Act have not been large. Between 1874 and 1891 only Rs. 14,000 were given out altogether, and less than Rs. 11,000 between 1891 and 1896. During the two following finanical years, which covered the famine of 1897, Rs. 1·25 lakhs were advanced. In the next famine of 1900 it was found that the series of bad years had left the proprietors so heavily involved, that they were not in a position to incur any fresh obligations. A large number of village works were consequently under-

taken from Government funds, being constructed both directly by a civil works establishment though situated on private land, and by means of free grants of money to the village proprietors, subject to the condition that they should give employment to all destitute persons in their villages who required it. In this way works of improvement consisting mainly in the construction and repair of tanks were carried out in hundreds of villages at Government expense, without the imposition of any further obligation on the already embarrassed village proprietors. The work done by Government in this manner in 1900, and during the subsequent years of scarcity of 1903 and 1906, represented a far larger expenditure than the whole amount distributed in land improvement loans from 1874 to the present time, but, unfortunately, no statistics, either of the improvements effected or of the expenditure incurred, have been obtainable. Altogether Rs. 1·96 lakhs have been advanced under the Act during the last 35 years, and of this Rs. 1·26 lakhs principal and Rs. 13,000 interest have been recovered. In 1897, when the largest advances were made on account of the famine of that year, the loans were given without interest and subject to remission of a fourth of the principal. Between 1890 and 1905 a total of 289 *sanads* or certificates for works of improvement were distributed, the majority of these being for the construction of *bandhias* or field-embankments.

The advances made under the Agriculturists' Loans Act were also trifling up to the period of the famine of 1897, but in that year about Rs. 1·20 lakhs were advanced, while in 1900-01 the enormous sum of 5½ lakhs was given out, the advances in this year being made free of interest. Again in 1902-03 Rs. 1·29 lakhs and in 1905-06 Rs. 1·01 lakhs were advanced. The total amount of the loans made under the Act from 1888 to 1906 was Rs 10·40 lakhs of which Rs. 7·35 lakhs have been recovered and Rs. 1·91 lakhs remitted. The bulk of the loans were given without interest and under this head only Rs. 23,000 have been obtained.

110. The rate of interest on private loans in cash varies from 6 to 24 per cent. according to the amount of the loan and the status of the borrower. For rice the most common rate is *deorhi* or 50 per cent. while 25 per cent. is charged to substantial borrowers or between friends. In the famines these rates were doubled. When a man borrows a loan of grain, he must pay the kotwār or village watchman an *anjā* or handful for measuring the grain, and when he makes payment, instead of 10 *kāthās*[1] interest per *khandī* of 20 *kāthās* he has to pay 11 *kāthās* to the moneylender and one *kāthā* to the kotwār, but the rice repaid at harvest is somewhat damp and one or two *kāthās* may be subsequently lost by dryage. If only *sawai* or 25 per cent. interest is charged, the lender deducts one *kāthā* in the *khandī* or five per cent. in consideration of the low rate of interest. And another half *kāthā* per *khandi* is deducted for the measurer. At the time of payment again the lender will take back 27 *kāthās* per *khandī* of 20 *kāthās*, charging one *kāthā* extra on account of the low rate of interest and one for the measuring fee of the kotwār. Thus in the end, the borrower has to pay nearly 50 per cent. interest. The practice of purchasing the crops in advance while they are on the ground is found sometimes in the Jānjgir tahsīl, where it is known as *damkari* or *laoni*. The lender gives grain valued at the high rates prevalent before harvest and stipulates to be repaid the equivalent cash value at the low grain rates following on the new harvest. Thus it has happened that a lender gave a loan at six *kāthās* to the rupee and was repaid after harvest at the rate of 18 *kāthās* to the rupee for each six *kāthās* advanced. But such a case as this is, of course, very rare. The word *damkari* means 'one who is at the point of losing his breath,' because his need of money is so urgent, and signifies aptly the nature of the transaction.

Private loans.

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[1] Equal to about 6 lbs. of unhusked rice.

Moneylenders.

111. The principal banking firm is that of Pahlād Sao, Kasondhā Baniā of Bilāspur; but Pahlād Sao himself is now dead and the business is managed by his three brothers. Their dealings are principally in the Bilāspur tahsīl, where they possess 45 villages. Bhondu Sao of Ratanpur is another large moneylender who owns five villages and has a mortgage on the whole of the Katgī estate. Other leading money-lenders are Jailāl Sao, Kasondhā Baniā of Pīpartalai near Kotā; Thākur Bhagwān Singh, Baghel Rājput of Pandaria; Deonāth Tiwāri, Chhattīsgarhī Brāhman of Ganiāri; and Parasrām Singh of Jagtahā near Mungelī, who is the richest man, as well as being the largest banker in the Mungelī tahsīl. In Jānjgir tahsīl Khedurām Sao, Kasarwāni Baniā of Seorīnarāyan, has the most extensive transactions, and next to him Darshan Singh, Daraihā Rājput of Sunad. Other prominent men are Gautam Dās Mahant, Bairāgi of Seorīnarāyan; Baijnāth Agharia of Karāri in Chandarpur; Hari Singh, Daraihā Rājput of Thathāri; and Keshri Singh of Mulmulā and Nīlkanth of Rasotā, Daraihā Rājput.

Transfers of landed property.

112. In 1868 land had little or no saleable value. In paragraph 307 of his Settlement Report Mr. Chisholm wrote:—'No 'further remarks seem necessary in 'connection with the assessments of the District, and I need 'only note the low value which landed property realises. In 'former days there was no sale for villages at all, and even 'during my experience one year's revenue was generally 'the utmost that could be obtained. Since the grant of pro-'prietary rights, there is no difficulty in obtaining pur-'chasers, but the price which can be secured for transfer is 'still very limited. I have a memorandum of 15 villages 'which have been transferred during the current year. The 'annual revenue of these villages was Rs. 1262, and the 'aggregate price realised on sale was only Rs. 4383, or 'less on the average than four years' purchase. The

'maximum price obtained was eight times the Government 'revenue, the minimum price a little in excess of one year's 'revenue. The fact of eight years' purchase having been 'already attained in more than one instance is an encourag-'ing circumstance, and shows that with an absolute title, 'even here landed property will gradually assume an 'appreciable value.'

At Mr. Chisholm's settlement then the average selling value of property was only four times the Government revenue. During the 23 years, from 1867 to 1890, a total of 503 whole villages and 383 shares in villages were sold, that is between a quarter and a third of the total number of villages in the District. The Government revenue on the property sold was Rs. 74,000, and the price paid was Rs. 6·67 lakhs, giving a multiple of nine times the land revenue. In spite of the large increase of revenue imposed at the settlement of 1888-90, and of the period of protracted agricultural depression through which the District has since passed, the value of property has steadily continued to appreciate. During the 14 years, from 1891-92 to 1904-05, a total of 184 whole villages and 999 shares of villages have been sold. The Government revenue on the property transferred was Rs. 76,000, and the price paid was Rs. 13·21 lakhs, giving a multiple of nearly seventeen and a half times the Government demand. Of the total of 1183 transfers, 166 were made by moneylenders and 912 by agriculturists, while 468 were made to moneylenders and 561 to agriculturists.[1] A considerable amount of property has thus passed from the cultivating to the capitalist classes, as was only to be expected when a body, containing so many improvident members as the mālguzārs of the District, had to undergo such

[1] During the 17 years ending 1907-08 according to the reconstituted District a total of 234 whole villages and 1108 shares of villages have been sold. The Government revenue on the property transferred was Rs. 1·01 lakhs and the price paid was Rs. 18·76 lakhs, giving a multiple of more than eighteen and a half times the Government demand. Of the total of 1336 transfers 68 were made by moneylenders, 1251 by agriculturists, while 540 were made to moneylenders and 629 to agriculturists.

a series of financial disasters as that imposed by the famines of the period from 1890 to 1900. Inasmuch as the land itself is now more valuable than it has ever been, there is no reason to regard the condition of the agricultural community with despondency. Up to the year 1899 the Mungelī tahsīl fared worse than the rest of the District, and the proprietors in this area were very heavily indebted, but in 1900 the Jānjgir tahsīl was also severely affected.

Castes of proprietors.

113. Statistics of the castes of proprietors of the revised District are not available, but at last settlement the principal landholding castes were the Brāhmans, who owned 524 villages out of 2242 or about a quarter of the whole number in the District. Next to them came the Baniās with 280 villages, the Kurmīs with 226, the Bairāgis with 156, the Chamārs with 148, the Rājputs with 226, of which 97 were held by Daraihā Rājputs, the Gonds with 101, the Muhammadans with 119, the Telis with 87, and the Tawars with 42. During the 20 years of Mr. Chisholm's settlement the Gonds lost 44 villages and the Tawars 42, while the Baniās gained 59 villages. The position of other castes did not materially alter.

Mr. Carey wrote of the proprietors with special reference to the Mungelī tahsīl :—'The best mālguzārs are 'the Kurmīs who are resident, while the worst are the non-'resident Marāthā Brāhmans. The former when well-to-do 'help their tenants over bad times by timely loans, and 'save them from the clutches of the Baniā. The tenant 'consequently is not bled to death and is able to pay a 'higher rent in addition to being better off than his luckless 'neighbours, the tenants of the Bhat Brāhman. The latter 'lives, as a rule, in Nawāgarh and comes but once or twice 'a year to collect rent. In many of their villages tenants 'are poor and invariably indebted. Taking the mālguzārs 'as a whole they are well-to-do. What militates most 'against their prosperity is the subdivision of proprietary

'right. It requires but little to demonstrate that a village 'which was sufficient to maintain two or three men comfortably at settlement can hardly be expected to support 'ten or fifteen sharers now. The mālguzārs, however, live 'and multiply on the land and are as stay-at-home as Frenchmen. When one reasons with them, one is confronted with 'many futile objections against migrating even from their 'own tahsīl in search of employment.'

Tenants.

114. Mr. Purshottam Dās wrote of the tenants as follows:—'Chamārs form the great 'bulk of the agriculturists; they are 'generally lazy and not so energetic as Kurmīs, Telis and 'Marārs. They are most untruthful and quarrelsome, and 'always ready to have recourse to litigation. They are found 'in large numbers only in the Mungelī tahsīl and the southern 'and western parts of the Bilāspur tahsīl. There are 'extremely few Chamārs in the Seorīnarāyan tahsīl, and as 'one proceeds eastward, one seldom meets with the cultivators 'of this caste. The Kurmīs, who chiefly inhabit the western 'parts of the Mungelī tahsīl, are energetic and prosperous. 'Chandnāhu Kurmīs are found in large numbers in the Jaijaipur and Hasod groups lying beyond the Hasdo river. The 'Gonds, who are generally poor, and the Telis, who are good 'cultivators, are met with in all the tahsīls, while the Rāwats 'are found mostly in the Bilāspur and Seorīnarāyan tahsīls, 'where they find sufficient pasture for their cattle. The 'Kewats and Pankās are known for their poverty. The former 'generally inhabit the villages situated near the banks of 'rivers and streams and subsist partly by fishing and partly 'by agriculture, while the latter maintain themselves both by 'agriculture and weaving cloth. A large number of Lodhis, 'who are generally prosperous and hardworking, cultivate 'land in the groups of Pendri, Padampur and Patharia in the 'Mungelī tahsīl. There are very few Muhammadan cultivators, 'and they are generally poor and destitute of agricultural 'resources. Though a large majority of the cultivators are

'accustomed to reside in miserable huts and to wear scanty 'clothing and have not yet completely changed their old 'habits of living, they have certainly made material progress 'and are, as a rule, in a much more prosperous condition than 'formerly.'

After the famine of 1900 the condition of the cultivators had distinctly deteriorated and many of the smaller men were without bullocks. The Deputy Commissioner wrote that they were reduced to cultivating their fields on what is known as the *jījītwā* system. The tenant who has no cattle goes to another man and works with him for two days, and on the third day he is allowed to take his employer's bullocks to his own field and use them. Similarly if he works for five days he is allowed the loan for one day of two pairs of cattle and a ploughman for the second pair. In this way an industrious man can cultivate on his own account about five acres of land. During and after the famines it was noticed that a large number of uncurrent coins found their way to the treasury. About 15,000 of these were received in 1897-98 and 4000 in 1901-02. This indicated that the cultivators had been reduced to digging up, from under their fireplaces, grinding-mills and doorsteps, coins buried many years before. Since then, the liberal policy of Government in the grant of loans and advances for seed and cattle has brought about a great revival of prosperity, while the high prices obtainable for agricultural produce have contributed to improve the condition of the agricultural classes. And it is probable that they are now on the whole better off than ever before.

PRICES.

Prices in past years.

115. Rice is the principal staple of the District and next to it comes wheat. The following statement, compiled from that given by Mr. Purshottam Dās in paragraph 22 of his Settlement Report, shows the extraordinary rise in the prices of these staples

which has taken place during the last sixty years. The prices are shown in pounds per rupee :—

	Rice.	Wheat.
1849—58	303	303
1859—61	213	213
1862—67	120	120
1868—71	42	68
1872—76	74	110
1877—81	59	99
1882—86	54	91
1887—90	38	45
1891—95	37	36
1896—1900	27	24
1901—05	30	31

The price of rice is now, therefore, about ten times as high as it was sixty years ago. In discussing prices during the early period, Mr. Carey wrote[1] :—'The figures for 1849 'to 1867 are taken direct out of Mr. Chisholm's Settlemen 'Report; those for the periods 1868 to 1886 were supplied to 'me by the agent to the Pandaria zamīndār. The first set of 'figures refers then to the whole District, while the latter 'are the prices current in Pandaria and are fairly representa- 'tive of the rates obtainable by cultivators for their grain in 'the Mungelī tahsīl. It will be noted that in the prices 'quoted for the years 1849 to 1868 the rates for wheat and 'rice were identical; and it is the case even now that the 'prices of rice and wheat approximate much more in 'Bilāspur town than in Mungelī. In Mungelī wheat is 'generally considerably cheaper than rice, while in Seorī- 'narāyan the tables are reversed, and rice is cheap while 'wheat is dear. An analysis of the figures of the statement 'shows that up to 1863 the prices in the District were 'extremely low. In 1864 they began to rise a good deal, 'export being stimulated by the failure of crops in other

[1] Quoted in Bilāspur Settlement Report (1891), para 22.

'parts of India and possibly owing to the blockade of 'the American ports. Mr. Chisholm shows that between '1863 and 1867 rice rose from 160 lbs. to 40 lbs. and wheat 'from 176 lbs. to 32 lbs. The climax was reached in 1869 'when wheat sold at 20 lbs. to the rupee and rice at 18 lbs., 'the cause of this abnormal state of things being a serious 'famine in the District. In 1870 prices became more normal 'and wheat sold again at 96 lbs. to the rupee and rice at '48 lbs. No disturbing influence occurred till 1876 when a 'bumper crop was obtained and wheat sold at 168 lbs. to 'the rupee and rice at 80 lbs. But people were disappointed 'who imagined that the halcyon days of old had returned, 'for next year Banjārās appeared in shoals from the Jubbul-'pore side, and the price of wheat swung back to 80 lbs. 'and of rice to 48 lbs., and during the last ten years '(1877—86) prices have fluctuated slightly around these 'figures, no great disturbing influence having occurred.'

Recent rates.

116. The rates on which Mr. Chisholm's settlement was based, were those prevailing from 1864—68 or about 120 lbs. per rupee for rice and wheat. During the years 1884—88 preceding Mr. Carey's settlement, the prices of these grains had risen to 54 lbs. for rice and about 57 lbs. for wheat. Since then the price of rice has never fallen so low. From 42 lbs. in 1891, it rose to 33 lbs. in 1895, 25 lbs. in 1896, 20½ lbs. in 1897, and 23 lbs. in 1900. From that year the average has been about 29 lbs. until the scarcity of 1907, when common rice sold at 17 and that of the best quality at 13 lbs. for a rupee. Prior to the construction of the railway and the development of the export trade wheat was, as a rule, cheaper than rice, being in less demand as a food-grain. But since 1891 it has sold at about the same rate as rice. The average price for the five years ending 1895 was 36 lbs., for the five years ending 1900, 24 and during the five years ending 1905, 31 lbs. In 1907 the rate was 17 lbs. or the same as rice. Gram fetches nearly the same price as wheat.

Miscellaneous prices.

117. For the thirteen years prior to the abolition of the customs line in 1874, the price of salt averaged 12 lbs. per rupee. During the next twenty years it remained fairly steady at 15 to 17 lbs., and in consequence of the recent reductions of duty it fell to 20 lbs. in 1903, 21 lbs. in 1905 and 23½ lbs. in 1907. Salt is obtained both from Bombay and Ganjām. Indian sugar, known as Mirzāpuri, is now principally consumed, and the imports of foreign sugar have considerably declined. Mirzāpuri sugar sells at 6 lbs. and foreign sugar at 8 lbs. to the rupee. *Gur* or unrefined sugar is also largely obtained from Northern India and can be had at 14 or 16 lbs. to the rupee, whereas the local product of Ratanpur, which is considered to be better, sells at only 12 lbs. The price of *ghī* or melted butter is from 1½ to 2 lbs. to the rupee. Milk is 16 to 20 lbs. for a rupee in towns and 32 lbs. in the interior. Grass costs about two rupees a thousand bundles and rice-straw four rupees a cartload. Firewood is two maunds to the rupee.

WAGES.

Farm-servants.

118. The rates of cash wages for labour have not been recorded for Bilāspur in past years, but those for Raipur given in the Raipur District Gazetteer may be taken as generally applicable. The existing rates for casual labour in Bilāspur town are three annas a day for a man and two annas for a woman, while in villages they are two annas and six pice respectively. Recently there has been some rise in the rates and a man's wage has gone up to four annas in Bilāspur. The great majority of the agricultural labourers of the District are paid in kind. *Saonjias* are the class most usually employed. As their name implies their remuneration consists of a share, usually a quarter, of their master's crop which is divided among all the *saonjias* whom he maintains. They are engaged in March for the year, and receive a measure of unhusked rice a day which amounts usually to half, and sometimes

to three-quarters, of the usual unit of grain measurement, the *lambarī* (or standard) *kāthā*.[1] The amount of grain advanced to them, together with 50 per cent. interest up to November, is deducted from their share of the produce. The amount advanced to them after November does not bear interest, as the rice crop has by then been gathered, and the daily allowance is treated as an advance from the *saonjia's* own share of it; although the latter is not distributed until March, when the *rabi* crop is harvested, and the year's account is made up. The *saonjia* is also usually given, in a good year, the amount of grain which is comprised in a 1½ foot length of the heap of rice as it lies on the threshing-floor after winnowing. He also gets the husk as a perquisite. *Saonjias* are preferred to other kinds of farm-servants, because, having a direct interest in the outturn of the crop, they require little or no supervision. In a good year this form of service is very profitable to the labourer. In a bad year, on the other hand, he may find himself at the end of his agreement considerably worse off than when he started, as his share of the produce may very easily fall short of the amount of grain advanced to him daily, plus interest up to November. In this case, however, it is usually held a point of honour with the employer to retain the *saonjia* in his service on the same terms to enable him to clear off his debt.

The second class of agricultural servants are called *ponrhārs*, who like the *saonjias* are engaged for the year in March. The *ponrhār* then receives an advance of about Rs. 10 in cash which he repays without interest when his service terminates. He is given as remuneration a *chaltū*

[1] The usual unit of grain measurement in Chhattīsgarh is the *lambarī kāthā*. This amounts to 4 seers 9 chittacks of wheat or husked rice, and to 3 seers 4 chittacks of unhusked rice. The *chaltū* (common) or *bhutiā* (labourers') *kāthā* is half, and the *majhlā* (medium) *kāthā* three-quarters of this. An attempt was made some years ago to introduce a standard *kāthā* of 5 seers of wheat or husked rice, in order to assimilate the Chhattīsgarh measures to those in force in Nāgpur and elsewhere; but it met with no great success, and the measure which is locally called the *tāmi* or brass *kāthā* (from the material of which it is made) is rarely used. The table of measures is:—

20 *kāthās* = 1 *khandī* or 'portion.'
20 *khandīs* = 1 *gārā* or cartload.

or sometimes a *majhlā kāthā* of unhusked rice a day, which, of course, he has not to repay. His employer also sets apart for him a small area of land, which is cultivated with the rest of the employer's holding, the employer supplying seed, plough-oxen, and labour, but to which the labourer is allowed to give extra cultivation in his spare time and of which the produce is given to him. At harvest time the *ponrhār* is given 4 *kāthās* extra as a reward for the extra labour involved in threshing and winnowing, which go on, in the case of the rice harvest, concurrently with the sowing of the spring crops, and, in the case of the *rabi* harvest, concurrently with the preliminary ploughing of the rice-land which is to be sown in *khurrā*. What the precise significance of the word *ponr* is is not clear. It is applied generically to the system of service just described, the essence of which appears to be the allotment of the produce of a particular plot of land to the labourer.

The third class of farm-servant, which high prices and short harvests are beginning to bring into some prominence, is paid in cash. A man so remunerated is sometimes called a *barasiā* or a servant engaged for the year, and sometimes is called a servant pure and simple *(naukar)*. He either receives a monthly wage of from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3-8, or is given at the beginning of the year (*i.e.*, in March,) an advance, the amount of which varies from Rs. 25 after a bad year when the labourers want work, to about Rs. 40 after a good year when labourers are scarcer. Men so paid are entitled to nothing besides their cash remuneration, except, at the time of the rice harvest, to as large a sheaf of corn as they can carry away on their heads; and they generally also receive a donation of 4 or 5 *kāthās* of unhusked rice at harvest time in consideration of the extra labour expended by them on threshing and winnowing. Remuneration in cash is not as yet very common; it is usually resorted to by the smaller class of employers whose stock of rice is not more than sufficient for their own requirements. Recourse is

also made to cash payment at times of pressure when extra hands are wanted, or when the labourer distrusts his employer's measurement of a grain wage. Most mālguzārs of any standing maintain in each village where they have any appreciable area of home farm a foreman-ploughman, who is called a *chirohī* and receives about Rs. 3 a month, his food, and a pair of shoes.

Besides these regular labourers there are a number of the poorer class of tenants who own less than a pair of plough cattle and cultivate their land with borrowed oxen. The idea underlying the allotment of the amount of work to be done by the plough for the borrower and lender respectively is of some interest. A man who has no cattle is called a *jīyūtwā* or one who ploughs by preponderance of lives. Three 'lives' go to each plough, *i.e.*, the two oxen and the ploughman. The ploughman who supplies one 'life' gets the use of the plough for one day, and has to plough for two more for the owner of the two oxen. In some tracts the plough is considered to have a 'life,' and the ploughman has to plough three days for the owner of the plough and oxen, before he gets the use of the plough for one day for himself. If the owner has two ploughs working together, one of which is driven by his own servant and one by a *jīyūtwa*, the latter has to plough for five (or seven) days for the employer, and can then take both ploughs into his own fields for one day. A man who owns one ox and borrows a second from another man is said to plough by *jiuhāpār* or partnership in lives. If he does all the ploughing, he works for two days for himself and for one day for the man who has lent him the second ox. If the two men share a pair of oxen, but each do their own ploughing, they each take the plough for a day in turn.

Labourers.

119. Casual labourers are known as *banihār* or *bhūtia*, and are usually paid in kind at the rate of one and a half *kāthās* of unhusked rice for a man, one *kāthā* for a woman and half

kāthā for a child yielding 4½, 3 and 1½ lbs. of husked rice respectively. These rates have not varied within living memory. Women are usually employed for weeding and harvesting the rice crop. At the harvest they receive a present of a sheaf from which three pounds of husked grain may be obtained. Casual labourers usually work for about eight hours a day. The periods of least demand for labour are the months of January and February after the harvesting of the rice crop and May and June from the time when the spring crops have been threshed till the weeding of rice begins.

Village servants.

120. The kotwār or village watchman is still paid in grain at the rate of a large *kāthā* of unhusked rice (yielding 4½ lbs. husked) per rupee of his rental from each cultivator and a sheaf of rice and wheat at the harvests. He has a field rent-free from the village proprietor and has the right of measuring grain sold in the village, for which he is given a pice or a handful of grain for each rupee of the purchase-price. At sowing-time in the Mungelī tahsīl he gets a little grain which is known as *bijphuti* or seed-breaking. The kotwār must be a man of low caste as he must go and summon the Chamār and other low-caste tenants to be present when their attendance is required and it would be derogatory for a high-caste man to do this. The kotwār is also known as Tehlū (one who serves), Raptā (one who makes a report), Gurhait (he who is in charge of the *gurhī* or travellers' rest-house), and Dwāria or door-keeper. The Lohār or blacksmith receives 30 to 45 lbs. of husked rice from the cultivators for each plough of land of four bullocks, and at threshing-time, a present of a winnowing-fan full of grain. He makes and mends the iron implements of agriculture, the cultivator supplying the charcoal and new iron when required. In the Mungelī tahsīl the rate is 90 lbs. of rice per plough. Recently many cultivators have taken to paying the blacksmith in cash for such work as they require, instead of

making a grain contribution. The barber usually receives a plot of land from the village proprietor and from the cultivators 30 lbs. of husked rice annually for each adult male and 15 lbs. for a child. The washerman receives a plot of land from the mālguzār, but the cultivators do not employ him as a rule except on the occasion of a birth or a death, when he washes the clothes which have been rendered impure by this occurrence. He is paid four annas at the birth of a boy and three annas at that of a girl, and a rupee and eight annas at the deaths of a man and a woman respectively. When the first child of a newly-married couple is born the Dhobi puts a brass *lotā* or vessel on the top of a post with some coloured cloth over it tied in the shape of a flag, and goes round to the houses of the relatives of the family where he is given a present. And when a death has occurred he is given a piece of cloth from the household of each relative who attends the funeral. The cash rates for washing clothes re usually half an anna a cloth in Bilāspur and two clothes for a pice in the interior. The hides of the village cattle go to one of the Kanaujia Chamārs of the village who is known as the Paikahā. The other Chamārs do not get any of the hides of the village cattle, but the Satnāmis sometimes take a half or the whole of those of their own. If he supplies the leather ropes and neck-thongs to the cultivators the Paikahā is given 30 lbs. of rice per plough, but usually people pay him for what they want in cash. The Baigā or priest of the village gods receives a piece of land from the village proprietor and presents from the cultivators at harvest.

MANUFACTURES.

Tasar silk.

121. The tasar silk industry is more important in Bilāspur than in any other District and the quality of the silk produced is better. The principal centres of silk-weaving are Bilāspur, Khokrā, Chāmpa, Chhuri, Akaltarā and Balodā. The fringes of men's

and women's body-cloths are sometimes dyed with patterns of crimson, pale-blue or yellow, but the body of the cloth is left its natural colour. Some weavers have recently taken to the manufacture of check patterns which they make by running narrow lines of crimson or black along and across the cloth. The price of the cloth varies from 12 annas to two rupees a yard and drilled cloth is more expensive still. It is considered that 1000 cocoons supply enough silk for 12 yards of the thin cloth usually woven. The people consider tasar silk as a sacred material and wear it while they are taking food. It is exported in small quantities to all parts of India and even to China.

Breeding of the silk-worm.

122. The following description of the silk-worm is taken from Mr. F. C. Dewar's monograph on the silk industries of the Central Provinces (1901). The tasar silk-worm is reared by Chamārs and Kewats. The seed cocoons are usually kept over from the previous winter, the pupa lying dormant in them, and are hatched out in June in a room. The female moths are kept from flying away and after being visited by the male moths they lay eggs on leaves of the *palās* tree (*Butea frondosa*) which are scattered about the room. The branches carrying the eggs are taken to the forest and fastened below other branches to protect the eggs from the sun and from the attacks of birds. Or sometimes the eggs are hatched out in earthen pots and the worms carried to the trees. As they strip a tree of leaves they have to be transferred to another, and during the period of feeding they must be constantly watched, and the rearers build huts in the forest during the rains. They still in places observe ascetic rules which are supposed to propitiate the worm and ensure a good crop of cocoons. They do not wash, shave or drink liquor until the winter crop is gathered in and their fare is salt and rice only. Sometimes they also abstain from conjugal intercourse. A considerable proportion of the worms, Mr. Dewar states, are always eaten by birds, and occasionally,

especially if the season be dry, disease decimates or even exterminates the crop. After the worm has fed for from 35 to 45 days he begins to spin his cocoon or as the natives put it 'he binds himself.' Mr. Dewar quotes the following description of the silk-worm :—'Each species of silk-worm has 'two stores of silk, one on each side of the alimentary canal, 'and below its mouth it has two so-called spinnarets or orifices 'through which the silk issues simultaneously in fine parallel 'filaments. As the silk is drawn out of the stores the worm 'coats it with a varnish, technically called gum, which contains 'a brownish-yellow colouring matter. The tasar worm in 'spinning his cocoon takes short sweeps of his head from side 'to side, depositing the silk very closely in parallel fibres as he 'does so. Besides the gum which coats the silk the worm 'secretes at intervals a cementing fluid which it kneads by an 'expanding motion of its body through the whole cocoon to 'consolidate and harden it. This cement gives to the cocoon 'its drab colour.' The spinning only takes three or four days so that if the worms have been hatched out in June, the first crop of cocoons is ready about the middle of August. The development of the pupa in these cocoons is rapid and the moth emerges in 20 to 25 days. The breeding processes are then repeated, but the crop of worms is, of course, much larger in September than it was in July. Finally about the middle of October the winter crop of cocoons is ready and this is sold to the weavers for the production of silk.

Spinning and weaving the silk.

123. The Koshtā, Mr. Dewar continues, usually secures his supply for the year at the local weekly bazar. The cocoons as he receives them from the breeder are hard, gritty and as unlike silk as can well be conceived. His first business is to soften them so that they can be unwound, and to kill the pupa inside, which might otherwise emerge when its natural winter exposure is interfered with. To effect this the cocoons are first dried in the sun and then boiled or steamed, alum and the ashes of some oilseed plant being

usually mixed with the water. When properly softened cold water is poured over them to remove the ash and they are then set to dry. The gummy matter is now gone and the cocoon is a soft brown skin with the dead pupa inside. They have next to be unwound and this business is done by women. After the outside silk has been pulled off a filament from a cocoon which has been properly softened will come away steadily and easily. The women gathers the filaments from four to eight cocoons together, according to the strength of thread required, into her left hand and winds them on to a roller which she holds in her right hand. When breaks occur the winder bends over the saucer holding the cocoons and with wonderful accuracy pounces on the broken end of the fibre, dips her fingers into a bowl of tamarind and water which is at hand, rolls the end into her thread and spins on. It is this branch of the manufacture of tasar silk, Wardle remarks, which is so defectively treated in India, and the implements represented [1] show how rudely the manipulation is managed as compared with the more finished reeling appliances of the Italians. The single threads are still too weak to be woven and four are usually twisted together first in pairs and the double threads into one. Throughout these processes the finger and thumb of the worker count for a good deal in removing irregularities, in twisting the thread and in sizing it. The thread turned out by the best workers is for such primitive appliances very good. In tasar there is a peculiarity which tells against smoothness and roundness as shown by the following quotation [2]: 'There is a striking peculiarity about the fibre 'of tasar silk. I have carefully and thoroughly examined it 'under the microscope, and find undoubtedly that it is almost 'flat and not round as is the case in the silk produced by

[1] In plate LVI, 'Handbook on the collection of wild silks in India, Kensington Museum.

[2] Monograph on Silk Industries, para 26, quoting from 'Wardle.

'the mulberry-fed worm. There is no doubt that it is to this 'property that tasar silk owes its glossy or vitreous look, 'reflecting a little glare of light from the angle of incidence 'on its flat surface, whilst the mulberry silk fibre, being 'round, reflects the light in all directions. By some this 'property is considered a drawback, but by the time the 'fibre has become modified and the flatness diffused in the 'loom, I think the lustre of the cloth is enhanced by it. 'This tape-like appearance gives the fibre this disadvantage, 'that it is less homogeneous than the round fibre of the 'mulberry silk, and I find an undoubted tendency in it to 'split up into smaller fibrets of which the fibre is evidently 'composed, causing the silk to swell out when subjected to 'severe dyeing processes, particularly the bleaching one of 'recent date.'

Cotton cloth.

124. Coarse cotton cloth, known as *khādi*, is woven by Koshtās, Gāndas and Pankās, mill-spun thread being almost solely used. Cotton cloths with borders of tasar silk are also produced. The best cloth is made at Bamnidīh and Karnod, and Bilāspur, Chandarpur, Chāmpa, Balodā, Takhatpur, Nawāgarh, Mungelī and Khokrā are other centres. There is no separate dyeing industry and the Koshtās either dye their thread before weaving or purchase it ready coloured. White cloths with red borders are very commonly worn by the country people.

Metals and other industries.

125. The principal centres for gold and silver work are Bilāspur, Chāmpa and Ratanpur. Ratanpur has a bell-metal industry, where a bright light-coloured polish is given to the surface of the metal as in Mandlā. The vessels are brittle and break when dropped. Small quantities of iron-ore are smelted in some localities in the zamīndāris and agricultural implements are made from the iron. Glass bangles are made in Ratanpur, Mungelī and other villages and bangles of lac in Ratanpur. The

village Kumhārs make the various earthen vessels which are in common use and also pipes with bowls and mouthpieces like English ones.

Kotā match factory.

126. A match factory, owned by a Mr. Amrit Lāl, Gujarāti Kunbī, has been working in Kotā near Kargī road station since 1902. The neighbouring forests contain soft timber of the *sāleh* (*Boswellia serrata*) and *semar* (*Bombax malabaricum*) trees, which is suitable for the production of matches. The capital of the factory is reported to be Rs. 1,20,000 and the outturn about 500 gross of boxes of matches daily. The goods were at first of inferior quality but improvements have been effected and they are sent to most parts of the Central Provinces and Berār. The factory has now however to face the competition of another recently started at Ellichpur.

Weights and measures.

127. The following scale of measures is employed in grain transactions:—

1 *chauthia*	=	18¼	chittacks.
1 *kāthā*	=	4	*chauthias* or 4 seers chittacks (about 9¼ lbs.)
1 *khandī*	=	20	*kāthās* (about 2¼ maunds).
1 *gāra*	=	20	*khandīs*.

In Bilāspur town grain is now sold by weight. The wages of farm-servants and village servants are paid by a smaller measure, known as the *chaltū* or *bhutiā kāthā* which has a capacity of 2 seers 4½ chittacks or half the ordinary one. In Pendrā this measure is in general use for all purposes, and is known as the *kunai kāthā*. In Chandarpur the Sambalpur measure the *tāmbi*, which has a capacity of 2 seers, is current. The *khandī* contains 20 *tāmbis* and is thus equivalent to a Government maund. The equivalent weights for the above measures of capacity are for husked rice. The varying quantities of other grains which go to a

kāthā measure are given as follows from Mr. Carey's Raipur Settlement Report:—

	Seers.	Chittacks.
Unhusked rice	3	4
Wheat	4	5
Gram	4	6
Linseed	3	11
Til	3	9
Husked kodon	4	9
Juār	4	0

The ordinary *kāthā* thus contains 4 seers 9 chittacks of husked rice and 3 seers 4 chittacks of *dhān* or seed rice. A *khandī* of *dhān* gives 10½ *kāthās* of husked rice and the difference in measurement is therefore nearly 50 per cent. But as shown above a *khandī* of *dhān* weighs 65 seers or 130 lbs. at 3 seers 4 chittacks per *kāthā*. It gives 10½ *kāthās* of husked rice, weighing nearly 48 seers at 4 seers 9 chittacks per *kāthā*. The loss in weight is therefore 26 per cent.[1] The word *kāthā* is derived from *kāth*, wood, and signifies a wooden measure, *tāmbi* is probably from *tāmba*, copper, and *khandī* is the equivalent of the English 'score.' The Gondī *kos* contains from 2½ to 3 miles in Bilāspur and the Government *kos* of two miles is known as the Sarkāri *kos*.

Markets.

128. The District has about 180 weekly markets. The cattle bazar of Bamnidih is the most important in the District, about 700 head being shown here every week on an average. The cattle-markets of Ganiāri, Gond Khāmi and Bilāspur come next in importance, about 500 head being brought to each. Sales are registered at all these places and also at Kaneri, Pāndatarai, Setgangā, Dāmapur, Takhatpur, Mungelī and Kumhāri Munda, a uniform fee of 1½ pies per rupee of

[1] The above calculation is taken from Mr. Blenkinsop's Settlement Report on the Drug Tahsīl (1903).

the sale price being charged. The aggregate fees at all the markets amount to about Rs. 450 per week except in the rainy season. Herds of cattle and young male buffaloes are driven by road from the Northern Districts through Rewah by Komoghāt and through Mandlā by Chakmighāt in the north-western corner of the District by wandering Basdewās and brought for sale to the markets of Bamnidīh, Ganiāri and Bilāspur. Many old and worn-out cattle are now sold for slaughter to the butchers at Bamnidīh market. Pendrā is the principal bazar in the zamīndāris and a considerable trade in grain, lac and other kinds of forest produce is done here. Lac is also sold at Chāmpa and Kotā, and country iron at Pāli in Lāpha and Sohāgpur in Korbā. Pāndatarai in Pandaria zamīndāri is a market for Pandaria, and Kawardhā uplands. Bamnidīh, Akaltarā, Seorīnarāyan, Balodā, Chandarpur and Dhūma are important markets for grain and other produce. A cloth bazar is held at Kotmi between Akaltarā and Pāraghāt stations.

Fairs.

129. Eight annual fairs are recorded as being held in the District, but they are all of a religious character and none has any especial commercial importance. The largest fair is that of Pīthampur which is held on the 2nd day of Holi and lasts for about five days. There is a Mahādeo here found by a Teli who is chiefly worshipped for removing pain in the stomach. The attendance here is said to be 40,000. The Kabīrpanthīs have a fair at Kudarmāl on the Hasdo river in Korbā zamīndāri, which begins on the last day of Māgh (January-February) and lasts about a week. Kudarmāl is said to contain the grave of Chūraman, the son of Dharam Dās, Kabīr's principal disciple and successor. Converts are here initiated into the Kabīrpanthī sect and temporary shops are opened for the sale of sweetmeats and other provisions. The Satnāmi Chamārs have a fair at Ratanpur on the same date, when they come and bathe in the Dulahrā tank. They also throw the bones of their dead into the tank and cut their

children's hair here. At Belpān, about 20 miles north-west of Bilāspur, a gathering is held also at the end of Māgh and pilgrims come and bathe in the small stream here, which is believed to be of the waters of the Nerbudda; it is thought that the sacred river flowed underground from Amarkantak at the request of a holy man. Vessels of bell-metal and lac toys from Mandlā are brought here for sale. Other small fairs are held at Seorīnarāyan, Chhuri, Bhatgaon and Kharod.

TRADE.

Trade in past years.

130. Mr. Chisholm wrote of the District in 1868 as follows:—

'The chief wealth of the District consists in its agricul-'tural produce. The adventurous carrier class of Banjārās 'following their strings of bullocks through the hilly wilds 'which shut in the Chhattīsgarh plain in order that they may 'return laden with grain have not inaptly termed this coun-'try "The Land of Plenty." They find here a surplus pro-'duce which in the absence of facilities for export seems almost 'inexhaustible, for in a great number of villages they cannot 'fail to observe the prominent and capacious grain stores well 'raised above the ground, walled and thatched, and containing 'from 50 to 200 cartloads of the great staple, rice. Wheat 'and oilseeds are also produced in great abundance, and there 'is a kind of reckless improvidence in many places in feeding, 'free of cost, all travellers who pass, that indicates a condition 'in which it may be said that want, using it in the sense of 'food, is almost unknown.' The District was, however, at this time cut off on all sides from any market for its produce, and even the most important traffic routes were rugged and inaccessible, quite unfit for wheeled carriage and admitting of export and import by means of pack-bullocks only for but six months of the year.

Mr. Chisholm valued the exports at this period at Rs. 7½ lakhs annually and the imports at Rs. 5 lakhs. He



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

RAILWAY STATION, BILASPUR.

wrote, however, 'A large export trade cannot be calculated 'upon as a permanent feature for so long as pack-bullocks 'remain the sole means of transport for produce, it is only 'profitable to carry grain from Chhattīsgarh, when prices 'westward have risen to a more than ordinarily high rate, and 'with the present means of communication, prices at Jubbul-'pore must be at least three times what they are here to make 'exportation remunerative.'

It is noticeable that at this time cotton is recorded as having been exported to the extent of about 10,000 maunds annually. The lac trade was also an important item, and the average exports during the years 1864-65 to 1867-68 were nearly 15,000 maunds valued at about Rs. 2½ lakhs. The bulk of the trade went west to the Jubbulpore market, about 140 miles distant.

In 1887 Mr. Carey remarked on the District trade in these terms:—

'The construction of the railway to Nāgpur and its 'extension to Rāj-Nāndgaon have given a great stimulus to 'the trade of the District. It is currently reported that less 'than 30 years ago grain used to rot on the threshing-floors 'for want of a market. During the last six years some seven 'or eight firms of Cutchis have established themselves in 'Mungelī. The Cutchi imports salt and exports grain and 'oilseeds. A large part of the produce of the Mungelī tahsīl 'is taken by tenants to Rāj-Nāndgaon and sold there and the 'Madras cartmen, who came annually from Kamptee to Bilās-'pur long before the Cutchi, still carry on a certain trade on 'their own account.'

The opening of the Katnī Railway in 1891 was followed by a sudden rush of grain out of the District. Large quantities of rice were sent to the North-Western Provinces by rail, and the Banjārā carriers, who once passed along in thousands carrying rice and wheat to the Jubbulpore market, were completely ousted. This line also brought the hitherto inaccessible forests of the northern zamīndāris within reach

of a market and a brisk trade in timber at once sprang up. Owing indeed to the lack of ordinary prudence on the part of the zamīndārs this traffic has been rather disastrous than otherwise, and their forests have been largely denuded of all trees worth cutting.

Rail-borne trade. Exports of grain.

131. The statistics of rail-borne trade have been compiled for the five years from 1902 to 1906, and are shown in the statements on the following pages. They do not, however, adequately represent the trade of the District, because a large proportion of the produce of Mungeli tahsīl is taken to Bhātapāra station which is now in Raipur. The statement of exports shows that in 1906 the exports were nearly one and half million maunds of the value of Rs. 71 lakhs, which is equivalent to Rs. 7-11 per head of population. In 1905 the exports were slightly larger and reached Rs. 77 lakhs. It is probable that even this figure is greatly below the amount to which the exports of the District would attain after a few good seasons. The imports in 1906 were nearly 600,000 maunds of the value of Rs. 66 lakhs, and the excess of exports over imports was therefore trifling, and this is in itself sufficient to show that trade is not in a normal condition. Rice is the principal product of the District, and in 1906 the exports of it amounted to nearly 500,000 maunds of the value of nearly Rs. 16 lakhs. It is sent to Bombay and also to Berār and Northern India. The exports of wheat amounted to 200,000 maunds of the value of nearly 6 lakhs in 1905, which was a much better year for this crop than 1906. Other grains and pulses were exported to the value of 8½ lakhs in 1905. The exports of linseed were 93,000 maunds valued at nearly 4 lakhs in 1905, and those of sesamum were 61,000 maunds valued at 3½ lakhs in 1906, this being the highest figure in the case of each oilseed. Both are sent to Bombay for the foreign trade. The exports of *ghī* in 1905 were 3000 maunds valued at a lakh of rupees.

EXPORTS.

Figures represent thousands.

Articles.	1902.		1903.		1904.		1905.		1906.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.
Cotton manufactures ...	5	1,79	4	1,58	4	1,90	4	1,81	5	2,11
Myrobalams	21	28	14	18	19	28	18	28	13	15
Gram and pulse	62	1,46	49	1,08	180	4,05	339	8,47	141	4,76
Rice	197	6,60	168	5,66	371	13.43	386	14,21	489	15,88
Wheat	100	2,85	70	1,85	134	3.76	199	5,85	107	3,68
Other grains and pulses ...	7	17	4	9	5	11	2	4	2	5
Hides and skins	5	96	4	97	4	1,22	6	1,71	8	3,07
Lac	20	5,45	27	7,36	25	9,00	46	16,76	30	12,96
Linseed	40	2,36	19	80	75	2,58	93	3,84	48	2,29
Rape and mustard	31	1,38	8	34	34	1,44	38	1,85	7	46
Til	29	1,61	75	2,89	67	2,34	57	2,90	61	3,49
Wood	171	3,45	124	2,51	85	1,73	99	2,02	129	2,62
Mahuā	9	32	16	56	10	36	17	59	16	56
Bones	...	...	...	...	4	14	5	16	3	11
Ghī	1	35	2	53	3	81	3	97	3	1,00
Other articles value known ...	188	11,36	284	16,53	289	15,71	275	15,50	311	17,71
Other articles value unknown ...	...	...	...	...	155	Value unknown	114	Value unknown	124	Value unknown
Total Exports ...	886	40,39	868	42,93	1,464	58,86	1,701	76,96	1,497	70,90

IMPORTS.

Figures represent thousands.

Articles.	1902.		1903.		1904.		1905.		1906.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.	Mds.	Rs.
Coal	3	1	6	1	4	1	9	2	6	2
Cotton manufactures ...	31	12,87	32	14,14	32	15.54	35	16,89	35	16,96
Turmeric	3	21	3	16	3	21	3	25	2	28
Fresh fruits	6	13	5	10	6	21	4	16	6	23
Grain and pulse	43	1,13	56	1,39	26	64	62	1,95	99	3,86
Gunny bags	9	76	9	78	13	1,30	19	1,93	15	1,73
Metals	14	1,58	21	2,24	12	1,63	12	2,00	13	2,09
Kerosine oil	14	62	15	68	16	75	20	91	23	1,06
Provisions	14	1,38	18	1,57	17	1,39	17	1,54	19	2,20
Salt	127	4.77	125	4,15	128	4.17	144	4.04	140	3,69
Sugar	20	1,76	23	2,04	24	2,31	27	2,64	25	2,27
Tobacco	6	51	7	44	6	74	8	97	9	1,19
Silk, raw, Indian	2	11,56	3	13,18	2	9.35	3	15,30	4	19,70
Chillies	1	9	1	9	1	6	...	4	1	13
Other articles value known ...	80	5.75	75	5,18	117	7.47	134	9.37	178	10,58
Other articles value unknown ...	...	...	...	...	13	Value unknown	6	Value unknown	10	Value unknown
Total Imports ...	373	43,13	399	46,15	420	45,78	503	58,01	585	65,99

Timber and other exports.

132. Timber was exported to the extent of 129,000 maunds of the value of Rs. 2½ lakhs in 1906, having declined from 3½ lakhs in 1902. *Sāl* and *bījasāl* timbers are principally exported, sleepers from Korbā and Chhuri being sent to Calcutta and logs and poles for building to the United Provinces. Of other forest produce lac is by far the most important and in 1906 it was, next to rice, the most valuable staple of the District trade. In this year 30,000 maunds of the value of nearly 13 lakhs were exported, while in 1905, the trade was even more valuable, the exports reaching Rs. 17 lakhs or 2½ lakhs more than the value of the rice exported in that year. Lac is largely produced in the forests of the zamīndāri estates. The exports of myrobalams, which are sent to Bombay, have averaged 17,000 maunds of the value of Rs. 23,000 during the last five years About 14,000 maunds of mahuā of the value of Rs. 48,000 are annually exported. Among other articles of forest produce are *bagai* or *bhabar* grass (*Bollinia eriopoda*) which is sent to Calcutta to be used in the manufacture of paper. As in other parts of the Province, a brisk trade has recently sprung up in the slaughter of cattle, and the export of dried meat, hides and horns. The meat is sent in large quantities to Burma and the bones to Bombay, these being ultimately converted into manure or into refining charcoal. The yearly exports of hides average about 5000 maunds of the value of more than 1½ lakhs. A number of Muhammadan hide contractors do business in the Jānjgir tahsīl. The price of a cowhide is three or four rupees, and six to eight rupees for that of a buffalo. Horns are exported for making combs and knives. Small quantities of tasar silk cloth are sent to all parts of India, and matches from the Kotā factory are despatched to most Districts of the Central Provinces and Berār. The feathers of the common white *baglā* bird were also collected and sent away, but this traffic has now been stopped.

Imports.

133. Of the total imports of Rs. 66 lakhs in 1906, cotton manufactures came to nearly Rs. 17 lakhs. The imports of European twist and yarn increased from 790 maunds in 1902 to 2500 maunds in 1906, while those of Indian thread declined from 18,000 maunds in 1902 to 14,000 in 1906. The imports of European piece-goods rose from 5000 maunds of the value of 3½ lakhs in 1902 to 10,000 maunds valued at 7 lakhs in 1906 and those of Indian piece-goods from 6600 maunds valued at Rs. 3·30 lakhs in 1902 to 8700 maunds valued at Rs. 4·40 lakhs in 1906. The Indian cloth is obtained principally from the Nāgpur and Badnerā mills. The imports of metals are 14,000 maunds valued at nearly two lakhs English iron comes from Bombay and brass vessels are brought from Bhandāra, Mirzāpur and Jubbulpore. The imports of kerosine oil have increased from 14,000 maunds of the value of Rs. 62,000 in 1902 to 23,000 maunds valued at more than a lakh in 1906. It has now almost entirely supplanted sesamum oil as an illuminant, but when burnt in open saucers in the native fashion the smoke is said to affect the eyes, and several instances are alleged of students who have had their sight injured in this manner. Some people, consequently, still prefer to use sesamum oil. Salt was formerly brought from Cuttack by boat to Seorīnarāyan, but is now imported from Ganjām and from Bombay by rail. *Gur* or unrefined sugar is obtained from Northern India and also from Chhindwāra and Betūl. Tobacco is still brought from Ganjām by road in small quantities being loaded on buffaloes, and is also obtained from Bengal. About 3000 maunds of turmeric, valued at Rs. 22,000, are imported every year from Cawnpore and Sambalpur. Areca nuts and cloves are brought from the Deccan. Cattle are imported from Sohāgpur in Rewah by road and buffaloes are driven in large herds from Saugor, Damoh, Narsinghpur and Pannā by the wandering Basdewās to the Ganiāri and Bamnidih markets. The returns show imports of raw Indian silk to the value of nearly Rs. 20

lakhs in 1906, but it is doubtful whether these figures can be accurate.

134. The principal railway stations are Pendrā Road, Bilāspur, Akaltarā and Chāmpa. Pendrā has the largest bulk of exports, but this is due to the fact that its trade is principally in timber whose weight is very great in proportion to its value. In 1906 the exports from Bilāspur were 258,000 maunds, from Akaltarā 250,000 and from Chāmpa 184,000. Bilāspur has now, therefore, a larger trade than either Akaltarā or Chāmpa, though a few years ago it is said to have been surpassed by both these stations. Some of the smaller stations as Kotā, Nailā and Bāraduār also have a substantial amount of trade. The exports of Nailā in particular have grown very rapidly during the last few years. In respect of imports Bilāspur has nearly half of the District trade, its imports having been 236,000 maunds out of the District total of 585,000 in 1906. Next to Bilāspur came Pendrā with 111,000 maunds, Kotā with 67,000, Chāmpa with 67,000 and Akaltarā with 48,000. The Surgujā and Rewah States obtained their imports by road from Pendrā station, and apparently goods from Kotā must now be distributed over part of the Mungelī tahsīl.

Railway stations.

135. The export trade is principally conducted by Mārwāri Baniās and Muhammadan Cutchis. One or two European companies are engaged in the trade in timber, lac and myrobalams, while Muhammadans deal in these articles as well as in hides. Bohrās import stationery and glassware. The Bohrās come from Sūrat and Ahmedābād and their headquarters in the Central Provinces is at Burhānpur. They settle down in the places where they trade, but the Cutchis stay only for eight months and return to Cutch during the rains. They are made up into small companies with shops in different parts of the District and in Bombay, and even their personal servants have small shares

Classes engaged in trade.

in their undertakings. Every year at the Diwāli their accounts are settled up, and their profits divided.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Railways.

136. The main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway passes through the centre of the District. Entering the Bilāspur tahsīl from the south close to Nipania station it follows a northerly direction to Bilāspur town where it takes a turn to the north-east and crosses the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls and the Chāmpa zamīndāri. The length of the line within the District is 65 miles and it has seven stations. It was completed to Raigarh in 1890. From Bilāspur a branch line on the broad gauge runs north to Katnī junction on the East Indian Railway, having been opened in 1891. Its length within the District is 74 miles and it has six stations. The scenery as it ascends the passes on to the Pendrā plateau is very picturesque. Sanction has been given for the survey of the line on the narrow gauge from Neinpur junction on the Sātpurā extension of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway through Mungelī to Bilāspur. The length of the line will be 170 miles and it will give a shorter and more direct communication between the Sātpurā plateau and Calcutta, and open up the rich Banjar valley of Mandlā. The earthwork for part of the line between Bilāspur and Mungelí was laid during the famine of 1900.

The old trade routes.

137. The old trunk routes have now been superseded by the railway and some of them are little more than grass-grown tracks. But they are marked by some of the finest avenues of trees to be found in the Province. At the settlement of 1868 traffic followed five principal routes, of which three were rugged and inaccessible, quite unfit for wheeled carriage and only admitting of export or import by means of pack-bullocks during six months of the year. Of these two were northern routes, one leading from the Chhattisgarh plain through Kendā, Pendrā and Sohāgpur to Rewah, and the other through Lāpha, Chhuri,



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Reproduced from drawing supplied by the Government of the Central Provinces. Longitudes refer to Greenwich Meridian, taking that of Madras Observatory as 80° 17′ 21″ East, and require a correction of — 2′ 27″.

Uprorā and Surgujā to Mirzāpur. Both these routes were, through a great portion of their length, simply tracks across the hills and through the jungles, along which few traders or travellers ventured alone. The place of the former has now been taken by the Katnī-Bilāspur Railway. The first part of the Mirzāpur road is the stretch between Bilāspur and Ratanpur, now maintained as a gravelled road, which it is in contemplation to metal. The road runs along the bank of the Arpā river and is famous for its scenery and avenues. Beyond Ratanpur the road is only a village track, but it is intended to gravel the 34 miles from Ratanpur to Chhuri. Ratanpur was formerly an emporium for the forest produce of the north of the District, but this is now taken to Ghutkū station. The third of the old tracks was that from Bilāspur to Mandlā through Mungelī, Setgangā, Kawardhā and Borlā. A gravelled road has now been made for the 40 miles from Bilāspur to Setgangā and this is gradually being given a metal covering. The road crosses numerous streams as the Ghongā, Nerbudda, Maniāri and Agar, all of which are unbridged and cause considerable difficulty to carts in the rains. Double ferry-boats have now been provided, which will carry carts and horses across in the heaviest floods. A village track runs for the fourteen miles from Setgangā to the Kawardhā border and is little used except for droves of cattle coming from Saugor and Damoh. The other two main routes were those leading to Sambalpur and Raipur. The Sambalpur road is little used, traffic being taken by feeder-roads to Akaltarā and Chāmpa stations. The southern road to Raipur through Nāndghāt has been superseded by the railway which runs parallel to and only a few miles from it. The road is gravelled and has a length of 20½ miles in the District.

Roads. Railway feeders.

138. The most important traffic routes at present are the railway feeders from Chāmpa to Bamnidih and Bhatgaon, Chāmpa to Korhā, Akaltarā to Pāmgarh, Akaltarā to Balodā and Bhātapāra to Mungelī. The Chāmpa-Bhatgaon road is metalled for the

first five miles and gravelled for the remaining eighteen. The important market village of Bamnidīh is situated at a distance of twelve miles from Chāmpa. Much grain from the Phuljhar zamīndāri and the Jānjgir tahsīl is brought to Chāmpa station along this road for export. The road from Chāmpa to Korbā, a distance of 23 miles, is now under construction. It carries a considerable quantity of forest produce. From Akaltarā station a road goes for ten miles to Pāmgarh where it joins the old Sambalpur road between Bilāspur and Seorīnarāyan. From Bilāspur to Pāmgarh on the Sambalpur road is a distance of 23½ miles, of which the first eleven miles to Mastūri are maintained as a gravelled road. This is the old Sambalpur road and is provided with a very fine avenue. A new road is to be constructed to give a direct connection between Seorīnarāyan and Jānjgir. The principal outlet for the Chhuri, Lāpha and Kendā zamīndāris is the Chhuri-Balodā-Akaltarā road. For the nine miles from Akaltarā to Balodā it is gravelled, but beyond that is only a village track. The principal trade route in the Mungelī tahsīl is the Mungelī-Nāndghāt-Bhātapāra road, crossing the Seonāth at Nāndghāt, which runs for nine miles in the District. It is to be metalled throughout as it carries much traffic, grain from the Mungelī tahsīl being taken to Bhātapāra instead of to Bilāspur, as it is more easily disposed of at the former place. From Setgangā beyond Mungelī a gravelled road goes to Pandaria, the headquarters of the large Pandaria zamīndāri. And from Pandaria two roads have been constructed by the Chhattīsgarh States Roads Division, one going south to Dongargarh station in Khairāgarh State, and the other east for 41 miles through Lormi to Kotā station on the Bilāspur-Katnī line. It is proposed to make a new road from Lormi to Mungelī, a distance of 19 miles, to facilitate the conveyance of produce to Mungelī from the Lormi forests. In Pendrā zamīndāri a road leads from Gaurelā station to Pendrā for 4¼ miles and another for 14 miles to Amarkantak. Some grain is brought to the railway from Mandlā along this road. A

surface road has also been constructed from Pendrā to Jatangā on the borders of the Mātin and Lāpha zamīndāris, and another northward to Parāsi through Bargaon. The Jatangā road is used for the timber traffic from Mātin and a considerable amount of lac is brought on bullocks from Rewah State along the Parāsi road. Pendrā station also acts as a distributing centre for the imports of Surgujā and Rewah States. In Chandarpur zamīndāri a gravelled road leads from Khursia station in Raigarh State to Dabhrā for 10½ miles and is continued as a surface road to Chandarpur for 13 miles. A feeder from Loharsi to Nipania station in Raipur District is partly constructed.

Statistics of roads and carts.

139. The total length of metalled roads in the District is only 26 miles and of unmetalled, 288 miles. The metalled roads consist only of short lengths on the Bilāspur-Mungelī and other roads and of a few railway feeders. The Public Works Department are in charge of 219 miles of road and the District Council of the remainder. The maintenance of the Public Works Department roads costs Rs 33,000 and of those under the District Council about Rs. 3000. The Council also execute trifling repairs to 841 miles of village tracks. The northern zamīndāris are still badly provided with roads passable for carts and, with the exception of timber, produce is often transported by pack-bullocks. The ordinary country cart is known as *bandī*. The wheels are usually made of *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*), and the body of *sāl* wood (*Shorea robusta*). A cart costs about thirty rupees and carries a load of six bags of 2½ maunds each or fifteen maunds. Bullocks are used for pack-carriage in the northern zamīndāris and salt and tobacco are sometimes brought on bullocks by Banjārās from Ganjām. In 1907 the District had 36,000 carts.

CHAPTER VI.

FORESTS AND MINERALS.

FORESTS.

Area and situation.

140. The Government reserved forests of the District under the management of the Forest Department comprise an area of 545 square miles or 7 per cent. of the total area of the District. Besides this the Sonākhān range with an area of 120 square miles, which was transferred to the Raipur District on 1st January 1906 on the redistribution of the Chhattīsgarh Districts, is still included in the Bilāspur Forest Division.

Forest ranges.

141. The reserved forests of the Division are comprised in the following four forest ranges:—

		Area in square miles.
(1) The East Lormi range ...	...	247
(2) The West Lormi range ...	...	199
(3) The Kuājathi Pantorā range	...	99
(4) The Sonākhān range ...	...	120
Total area	...	665

Three of these, the East and the West Lormi ranges lying in the north-west corner of the District and the Sonākhān range lying south of the river Mahānadi, are large compact areas. The remainder of the Government forest lies scattered in small patches towards the centre and the east of the District. The forests in the north-west and south are more or less hilly with intervening plateaux while those of the centre and the east grow on plains save one large patch known as the Bitkulī reserve in the Pantorā range covering an area of 24 square miles which is abruptly hilly again. Classified from this point of view and also from that of variations in the

rainfall and soils, three distinct types of deciduous growth are noticed :—

Character, constitution and composition of the crop with respect to soils, elevation and rainfall.

142. (*a*) The forests of the plains, where generally the soil is heavy and rainfall is comparatively less, are characterised generally by rank growth of grass, stunted, deformed and diseased trees consisting principally of fuel species, inferior timber trees such as can only be used for agricultural purposes also sometimes being intermixed. These forests generally deteriorate into scrub.

(*b*) The forests of the valleys and plateaux and on very gentle slopes of the hills with cool northerly aspects consist of valuable timber trees, such as *sāl*, *bīja*, *sāj*, etc., and bamboos either mixed or pure, which attain a good size. Here the forests get a good rainfall, the water level is not very deep, and the soil also is light. The porous nature of the soil derived principally from the disintegration of sandstone affords facilities for the strong development of the root systems of plants. Reproduction is good and the permanency of the forests is assured.

(*c*) The forests on bad hill slopes and in the valleys with a warmer southerly aspect are principally characterised by an inferior growth of bamboos, the rugged tops of hills sometimes only growing the hill grasses.

Forest produce and their local economical value.

143. Among the major produce the following timber and fuel species require mention :—*Sāl* or *sarai (Shorea robusta)*, teak or *sāgon (Tectona grandis)*, and *bīja* or *bīja sāl (Pterocarpus marsupium)*, though the last two valuable timbers are not available in large quantities.

Siris (Dalbergia latifolia) is an ornamental dark wood occasionally found.

Sāj (Terminalia tomentosa) is not very popular although it yields good straight poles for roofing. *Karrā (Lebidieropris orbicularis)* when growing straight will yield poles much

valued locally as it can resist insect attacks. *Dhaurā (Anogeissus latifolia)* makes strong cart axles, *tendū (Diospyros tomentosa)* and *tinsā (Ougeinia dalbergioides)* make the best cart shafts while *senhā (Lagerstrœmia parviflora)* is the most useful of all woods to the agriculturist. Nearly all trees in the forests yield good fuel except *galgal (Cochlospermum Gossypium), salai (Boswellia serrata), semar (Bombax malabaricum , gunjā (Odina Wodier)* and other soft wooded species. *Salai, gunjā* and especially *semar* are in demand for match wood at the match factory.

Minor produce.

144 Of the bamboos, grasses and other minor produce, the following may be noted:—The chief bamboo is the *Dendrocalamus strictus.* The *chir* and *birain* grasses make good brooms. The *bagai* grass *(Ischæmum angustifolium)* is twisted into thin cordage used locally for weaving *chārpais* or cots. *Suklā* grass yields the best thatching grass and *mucheli (Iscilema Wightii)* is the fodder grass. Honey, wax, myrobalams, *chironjī*, catechu or *katthā*, gums, hides, and horns, lac, *tīkhur*, etc., are other minor products. The principal minor produce of the District which has become prominent during the last few years is lac. In 1904-05 the revenue from lac and other minor produce amounted to Rs. 3958, while during the year ending with 31st March 1908 it was Rs. 7522.

Muslī kānda, white *muslī (Chlorophytum breviscapum)* and black *muslī (Curculigo orchioides)* found in the Lormi forests is a useful article much prized for its medicinal properties. It is valued as a tonic and has great sustaining properties being used in cases of debility, etc.

Past and present system of forest management.

145. Up till the year 1888 the Government forests were under the direct control of the Deputy Commissioner of the District. They were then made over to the Forest Department. Up to 1893-94 they were open to the extraction of timber of the inferior species, bamboos, fuel, both

green and dry, grass, and all other minor products, on licenses, no restriction as to the locality from which the material was to be obtained being imposed. In the year 1893-94 another system was introduced by which the felling of all green wood was prohibited except from coupes especially marked off for this purpose, but dry timber, dead and dry fuel, grass, and bamboos could be removed as heretofore from any part of the forests, provided a license was first purchased at a revenue post for the quantity of material required. This system is still in vogue. Working-plans for the East and West Lormi ranges as well as for the Chitta Pandaria reserve in Pantorā range have been in force since the year 1895. These plans however only provide for the immediate exploitation of a small fraction of the forests of the Division and a complete working-plan for all the forests of the Division is now being prepared. In 1907-08 the forest staff consisted of a Divisional Forest Officer, three Rangers, one Deputy Ranger, nine foresters, 35 permanent and 28 temporary forest guards.

Grazing.

146. Grazing is at present allowed to all cattle for which licenses are taken out. These licenses are only available for the forests declared open for grazing, a very small percentage of the total area of the forests being always closed to grazing in the interests of working and to supply standing grass for thatching purposes. There are two classes of cattle which find pasture in Government forests besides the cattle of forest villagers :—

(1) Cattle which live on the outskirts of the forests and graze only during the day in the jungle and are driven home in the evening, and (2) cattle belonging to owners living at long distances which remain in the jungle almost all the year round. The latter classes of cattle live and breed in the jungle, the owners receiving a fixed quantity of *ghī* per head from the graziers, as well as all the male offspring. Cattle camps or *daihāns* as they are called have been located

in the Lormi and Sonākhān ranges for several generations past. The number of both classes of cattle is steadily increasing. The number of animals entering the forest in the year 1907-08 was 43,679. In this District no fodder grass is cut and converted into hay for use in the hot weather or to supplement the supply of rice-straw.

Fire-protection.

147. Fire-protection is afforded to all the more important forests of the Division, the intensity and cost of the protection varying with the value and importance of the forest. In the year 1898-99 an area of 170,933 acres was protected at a cost of Rs. 2527; this has increased to an area of 267,961 acres protected at a cost of Rs. 4344 at the present time.

Receipts and Expenditure.

148. The annual revenue from different sources for the two quinquennial periods from 1898-99 to 1902-03 and from 1903-04 to 1907-08 is given below:—

Year.	Timber.	Fuel.	Grass and grazing.	Bamboos.	Minor forest produce.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1898-99 to 1902-03.	2137	898	3631	5412	3941	1237	17,256
1903-04 to 1907-08.	4834	1346	4857	9251	5399	2696	28,383
Average per annum.	3485	1122	4244	7331	4670	1967	22,819

The Department is making rapid progress in the receipts, but at the same time the expenditure has also increased. The following statement gives the revenue and expenditure for the same period:—

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Deficit.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1898-99 to 1902-03	17,256	26,369	—9113
1903-04 to 1907-08	28,383	36,564	—8118
Average per annum	22,819	31,466	—8647

The Division has been worked during the last ten years at an average loss of Rs. 8647 per annum. This is due to the opening up of the forest by the construction of roads, buildings, tanks and wells, etc. In another few years the programme for the works contemplated will be complete and the expenditure brought down. It is then expected that the revenue will increase and permanently add to the income of the Department. The produce is nearly all sold for local consumption.

Private forests. Area and situation.

149. Besides the Government forests the District contains 2653 square miles of private forests, of which 756 square miles belong to mālguzārs and 1897 square miles to zamīndārs. With rare exceptions (Ratanpur and Lormi) all the mālguzāri forests of the District are little better than scrub. At the last settlement (1889) the mālguzāri income from jungles was estimated at Rs. 25,549. The jungles are all included in village boundaries and tenants of the village have rights of *nistār*. There is very little sale of timber to outside villages. The Lormi tāhutdārs get a good income from lac, Lormi lac being celebrated. The zamīndāri forests are very extensive. Pandaria lies to the west, Kendā, Lāpha, Mātin and Pendrā to the north Uprorā, Chhuri, Chāmpa and Korbā to the east and north-east. Kanteli has no forest.

Character of the forests and nature of the country.

150. The character of the forests and the nature of the country are much the same as in Government forests. Many of the forests are secluded and hilly. The vegetation, once probably very rich, has now been carelessly hacked

out; sylvicultural principles have been absolutely disregarded and in nearly every case the forests have been over-cut, neglected, over-grazed, maltreated and are generally in a ruined state. Apparently the only object in their treatment has been to make revenue out of them and to get as much produce as possible with the least trouble and expense. On the advent of the railways zamīndārs gave contracts sometimes at ridiculously low rates. Some fine timber still remains in the more inaccessible parts, but the process of destruction is still going on in places, though zamīndārs have perhaps now become more alive to their own interests. The zamīndār of Lāpha is an honourable exception and has carefully preserved his forests from over-cutting. As compared with Government rates, the forest produce of the zamīndāris is sold much cheaper. Purchasers are allowed to cut and extract produce without the restriction and rules imposed in Government forests. They are therefore largely attracted from the open country and the limit is only set when distance more than counterbalances the lowness of the rates. There has been in the past decade a large export of sleepers from Akaltarā and Chāmpa railway stations (the produce of Chhuri and Korbā zamīndāri jungles) and of sleepers and poles from Belgahnā, Khongsarā, Khodri and Pendrā railway stations (the produce of Kendā, Pendrā and Mātin zamīndāri jungles). Export though much reduced is still going on. The forests of Pendrā, Mātin, and Uprorā have always been resorted to by graziers with cattle from the north. In Mātin many such north country graziers have permanently settled down and opened up villages. At the last settlement (1889) the zamīndāri income from forests was estimated at Rs. 39,534 excluding the area handed over to the Raipur District. Now it is estimated at Rs. 74,829.

Private rights in zamīndāri forests.

151. Fees for grazing and produce are levied by license from outsiders by all zamīndārs. From resident tenants, non-tenants and artizans commutation fees at various rates

are usually levied for grazing, timber for household use, wood used in trades (such as iron smelters), and occasionally minor produce. Lac is always given on lease and sometimes mahuā and other minor produce.

At the first regular settlement in 1869 it was the original intention of the Government to treat zamīndāri forests exactly like mālguzāri forests; to allot a sufficient area of forest land for the use of the zamīndārs; to exclude the remainder from their estates under the excess waste rules; and to constitute it the property of Government. These views however became so far modified that the intention of forming separate State reserves from zamīndāri forests was abandoned, and it was decided that the whole forest was to be left under the control of the zamīndārs. But in order to assert the rights of the Government a separate forest *takolī* (quit revenue) was to be fixed, and a re-assessment after periods of three to five years was to be imposed. In practice, however, in Bilāspur as elsewhere, the forest *takolīs* though separately assessed were fixed for the full term of settlement, and no distinction was made between the condition on which the forests were held and those applying to the rest of the zamīndāri area. Hence the zamīndārs of this District are now considered to have proprietary rights over the forests of their estates.

Subproprietors.

152. Subproprietors hold individual villages in the zamīndāris, and it has long been decided that they possess the same rights over the whole forest area included within the boundary of their villages as the zamīndār possesses over the rest of his estate. There are no other private rights in zamīndāri forests except the somewhat indefinite right of cultivators to certain minor products—grass, leaves, thorns, etc.

Government control of zamīndāri forests.

153. It has from the first been clearly asserted that zamīndārs are liable to Government restrictions in regard to the exploitation of their forests. The earliest

rules (issued in 1867) simply declared that the forests of each zamīndāri should be managed under the rules obtaining in Government unreserved forests; and that no arrangement for felling trees over a term of more than one year, or for the sale of more than 1000 trees of the reserved kinds, should have effect without the Deputy Commissioner's sanction. The value of the zamīndāri forests even at this early date was much impaired. They were specially examined in 1862 by Captain Burton and Lieutenant Forsyth, on the basis of whose report Sir R. Temple wrote:—'The whole 'territory is more or less covered with a vast *sāl* forest much 'of which however has been injured by wasteful clearings, 'and much of it is naturally of a stunted character. There 'are however many fine trees remaining in Lāpha. In 'Korbā there is a vast *sāl* forest 300 square miles in extent, 'one-fourth of which may be considered as first class timber. 'The forest has been much injured by the girdling of trees 'for the extraction of resin dammer. There is also a fine '*sāl* forest in Uprorā on the banks of the Chornai river, but 'here as a rule the largest trees are in the most inaccessible 'places.' The rules issued in 1867 were not enforced and the destruction of valuable forest still continued. In 1883 the Chief Commissioner wrote:—'Instances of the most 'lamentable waste have occurred in the Chhattīsgarh zamīn-'dāris, but as the railway has not got near the zamīndāris 'of this Division the outcry has in fact been confined to 'Bhandāra and Bālāghāt. But unless something is done 'now the effect of the prolongation of the railway to Cal-'cutta will be felt in all forests within the reach of railway 'contractors throughout the Chhattīsgarh Division. The 'zamīndārs are the wood contractors' natural victims.' In spite of this note of warning nothing was done until the settlement of 1890. Then a formal attempt was made to grapple with the difficulty. The forests of each zamīndāri (taken to consist of the balance of area after the exclusion of villages selected for survey) were constituted *mahāls* within

the meaning of article 46 of the Land-Revenue Act, and by a Gazette Notification of the same year rules were imposed for their control. These rules have continued in force up to the present time. But in practice they have never yet been enforced. Timber cutting, *dahia* cultivation, and the ringing of *sāl* trees for resin, etc., are still regulated solely by the extent of the zamīndārs' own interest in the conservation of their forests, with the result that after 15 years of wholesale destruction by the contractors whose advent had been so clearly foreseen the forests have been largely exhausted of all their most valuable timber.

Roadside arboriculture.

154. The roads of the District are well supplied with avenues, the best being found on the Raipur-Bilāspur road, the Bilāspur-Seorīnarāyan road, the Bilāspur-Mungelī-Setgangā road, the Bilāspur-Ratanpur road and the Nāndghāt-Mungelī road. Originally much good work was done by private agency and efforts are still made to utilise it by the grant of *sanads* carrying the right to collect the produce of the trees so planted and to remove all dead wood. Arboricultural operations are carried on by Government through the medium of the Public Works Department and the District Council, and regular working-plans are in force. There are 116 miles of avenues on the Public Works Department roads and 13 miles remain to be planted. On 38 miles of the District Council roads avenues have been established and 29 miles remain to be planted. The trees principally planted in the avenues are the mango (*Mangifera indica*), *nīm* (*Melia indica*), pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*), *jāmun* (*Eugenia Jambolana*), *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*) and tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*).

MINERALS.

Minerals.

155. Bilāspur District has been but very imperfectly explored for minerals. There are no mines. This is rather surprising as railway communications are good. Probably when the Bilāspur-

Mungelī-Mandlā Railway is constructed the western portion of the District will be a fruitful field for explorers. The District is perhaps best known at present from the Korbā coal-field. On three occasions portions of this coal-field in the Korbā and Chhuri zamīndāris have been prospected by European firms and syndicates, but operations have been abandoned. The exact result of prospecting is not known. A coal outcrop has been reported in the far north-eastern boundary of the Uprorā zamīndāri, and there has been recently a discovery in the Lāpha zamīndāri of coal of better quality than hitherto found in the Korbā field. This discovery is considerably further west of the Barākar series as shown in the Geological Survey maps. Iron ore is found in all the hills to the north of the District and in Pandaria zamīndāri. It is worked in native fashion in most of the northern zamīndāris. Magnetite of very good quality has been found in large quantities on the Kendā and Lāpha borders. Prospecting licenses for manganese have been applied for, for Lormi and two or three other villages, but the applications were not proceeded with and presumably nothing was found. A piece of very good manganese was seen by Mr. F.C. Turner, said to have been picked up north of Kedai in the Uprorā zamīndāri. Manganese of fair quality in small flat boulders has been found at Ratanpur and in the Pandaria zamīndāri. So far nothing of importance has been found in reefs.

There are traces of gold in quartz of the metamorphic belt running from Pandaria to Lormi. It is washed for in the Hasdo and Mahānadi rivers and in the Jonk river, now in Raipur District. Sonākhān, a private revenue-free estate now in the Raipur District, contains gold, but prospecting for it was unsuccessful. Mica is found on the Komoghāt leading to Pendrā, and there is a well defined reef near Belpāt in the Pendrā zamīndāri. Traces of copper have been found in Ratanpur and Lormi. Plumbago has been found in bluish white quartz in the Khondrā forest reserve. Galena mixed with copper pyrites in white milky quartz has been

found in the Pandaria zamīndāri. Red and white clays are common, the white more common than the red. The clay is used for plastering houses and is called *chhui matti*. Building stone (sandstone) is found chiefly at Bilāspur and Seorīnarāyan. The Bilāspur stone is not good. A fair stone not widely known is found at Kusmundā in the Chāmpa zamīndāri. Many of the railway station buildings were made of this, it is said. Inferior slates are found at Seorīnarāyan. They are used in the local schools. Limestone is common all over the level portion of the District. Some concessions have been applied for at different times.

CHAPTER VII.

FAMINE.

156. No regular reports of famine exist prior to 1868-69, but from oral enquiries made in 1867 it is known that in 1828 a failure of both the autumn and spring crops occurred. The price of wheat and gram rose to 12 seers per rupee, against a normal rate at that period of anything between 120 and 400 seers. Such a difference in prices must necessarily have produced severe distress. In 1833-34 owing to the distress in the north of the Province, grain was exported from Chhattīsgarh by Government agency, and in the following year 1834-35 the rice crop partially failed in Chhattīsgarh itself. In spite of the prohibition of export prices rose to 24 seers to the rupee or more and thousands of people are reported to have perished.

Early famines.

In 1845 the rice crop failed for want of rain and prices rose to an unprecedented extent, rice being sold at 10 seers and wheat at 7 seers to the rupee and acute distress ensued. In 1856 again a scarcity was caused by high prices arising from the export of grain to the north of the Province.

In 1868-69 the rain failed in August and only a few showers were received at the end of September and nothing in October. Except in the black-soil tracts of Mungelī where half a crop was obtained, the outturn of rice was only nominal. On the good black-soil of Mungelī the spring crops were fair, but elsewhere they yielded poorly, only slight showers being received in the cold weather. Considerable distress ensued and the bulk of the relief was afforded by village proprietors who undertook the construction or repair of tanks in 97 villages, affording employment to some 6000 persons. Govern-

ment opened three or four road-works on which 3500 persons were employed, but the total expenditure was only Rs. 18,000. Poor-houses were established at a number of centres, being supported partly by private subscriptions and partly by a Government grant. A severe epidemic of cholera broke out in the hot weather, and it was reported that 618 deaths had been caused by starvation. The census statistics of this period are too inaccurate for any deductions as to the effect of the famine on the population, but there is no doubt that distress was severe, and in these modern days measures of relief would have been on an altogether different scale.

Other bad seasons.

157. In 1877-78 the monsoon was abundant, but long breaks alternated with heavy falls of rain, and it ceased early in September. The rice crop was short in the Mungelī tahsīl, and the spring crops were injured by rust and caterpillars owing to cloudy and rainy weather in the winter months.

In 1886-87 the rainfall was short in August and September and the rice crop was destroyed on high-lying fields and over a great deal of the yellow soil or *matāsi* area. Good showers were received at the end of October and in November, and the spring crops on black-soils did fairly well, but in the area where the rice had failed the spring harvest is not important. Some distress ensued but was met by small road-works while many mālguzārs undertook the construction or repair of tanks or field embankments. In the following year, 1887-88, another long break in September and October did some injury to the rice crop. Again in 1888-89 the monsoon failed at the beginning of September and very little rain was received during most of that month and October. In most of the high-lying tracts the rice quite withered and was left to be grazed off by cattle. The spring crops also suffered from lack of rain and were poor. Work was provided by the construction of the railway from Bilāspur to Katnī and on some roads.

Seasons prior to 1897.

158. In 1894 heavy and prolonged rain during the last three months of the year did much injury to all the standing crops and damaged the rice harvest on the threshing-floors. Wheat was partly and linseed almost entirely destroyed by rust, the Mungeli tahsīl suffering most in this year. In the following year, 1895-96, the monsoon failed abruptly at the beginning of the year, and with the exception of slight showers drought prevailed for the remainder of the year. The rice harvest was less than half the average, and less than 50 per cent. of the spring crop area could be sown. The Bilāspur District fared worse than Raipur owing to its having already had a bad year in 1894-95 and during 1896 severe distress, deepening into famine, prevailed over a large area. Owing to the changes of Deputy Commissioners and the want of experience in famine work of the officers of the Commission the extent of the distress was unfortunately not fully realised. Some private works were undertaken by village proprietors and on Courts of Wards estates, but much larger measures were really required. The average price of rice was 12½ seers as against 16½ seers in the previous year and the death-rate rose to 47 per mille from 26 in 1895.

The famine of 1897.

159. Bilāspur was thus in ill case to meet the even worse season which was now in store for it. The monsoon of 1896 gave heavy rain up till the end of August, but again failed abruptly in the beginning of September. For most of that month and October none was received. The cultivators had everywhere cut the embankments of their fields to prevent the rice from being swamped, and under the influences of the hot sun and dry west winds during these months the rice crop rapidly withered, while the ground became too dry for the spring crop to be sown. The outturn of rice was only 30 per cent. of an average harvest, and the area sown with cold-weather crops was little more than a quarter of that ordinarily placed under them. This was the more

unfortunate as good rain was received in November and January, and the small acreage sown gave an excellent outturn. Of the three tahsīls Mungelī was the most affected and Jānjgir, or as it was then called, Seorīnarāyan, the least. Certain areas in the north-west and south-west were as severely distressed as any part of the District owing to the great natural poverty of the soil.

Relief works under the Public Works Department were opened from January 1897, the total number of charges being 14. New roads were made from Kotā to Lormi, Bhātapāra to Nāndghāt and from Bilāspur station and Chāmpa station to the towns. Several other roads were also improved. The numbers on works reached a maximum of 44,000 in August 1897. A number of tanks were also made under the Civil Department, the principal ones being those at Bhātapāra and Dhūma, while at Bilāspur an insanitary tank was filled up. A large number of tanks were also constructed or repaired by means of famine loans, or from the private resources of landowners, and it was estimated that as many as 70,000 persons were employed on these works in May 1897. About two lakhs were advanced in Famine and Land Improvement loans. Special relief was given to weavers in many villages, advances of thread being made to them and the cloth purchased at 5 annas per seer (2 lbs.). The advances were given through zamīndārs, mālguzārs and schoolmasters. Poor-houses were opened at Bilāspur, Mungelī, Pendrā, and Pandaria, being at first supported by private subscriptions and afterwards taken over by Government. In March 1897 the system of granting doles to incapable persons at their homes, known 'as village relief,' was introduced and this afterwards assumed large proportions as the condition of the people grew worse. In September 1897 a total of 90,000 persons or 8 per cent. of the population were being supported in this manner, a figure which at that time was considered enormous. It was not considered safe to entrust the mukaddams or headmen of villages with the

administration of relief and it was distributed through Revenue Inspectors, great difficulty being experienced owing to their small number and the distances which they had to traverse. Additional appointments were afterwards made to relieve the burden. Kitchens for the distribution of cooked food were opened in the rains.

Statistics of the famine.

160. Relief measures of all kinds lasted from January to December 1897, the highest number of persons in receipt of assistance being 149,000 or 13 per cent. of the population in September 1897. The expenditure on relief was Rs. 20 lakhs and in addition to this Rs. 3 lakhs or half the land revenue of the year was suspended, more than a lakh was given out under the Agriculturists' Loans Act and three lakhs distributed from the Indian Charitable Fund. The mortality for the year 1897 reached the terrible figure of 101 per mille as against 47 in 1896. The death-rate was not very high up to April 1897, but from that month it rose rapidly obtaining its maximum during the rains; the frames of the people had generally become enfeebled from the want of sufficient food, and when the trying period of the year came on they succumbed without a struggle to cholera, dysentery or malaria. The price of rice was between 9 and 10 seers a rupee between September 1896 and March 1897. From April it rose further and in August reached the highest point of 7½ seers to the rupee, an increase of 167 per cent. over the normal price of 18 seers.

The years 1898 and 1899.

161. The following year 1897-98 gave a bumper rice crop and a good average harvest of other grains. And this was followed by another good rice crop in 1898-99 though the spring crops were injured by the absence of winter rain, and in the western part of the Mungelī tahsīl the rice crop was also short. In these tracts some village relief was given in the hot weather of 1899.

162. The monsoon of 1899 broke in June and gave 10½ inches in that month and the first part of July. After this a long break occurred, and though one or two good storms passed over the District in August, the monsoon was never again really established and died away altogether early in September. The rice crop was also attacked by grass-hoppers, and except in fields completely protected by irrigation was totally lost. Cotton and til yielded well and kodon gave half a crop, but these grains with the exception of kodon in the Mungelī tahsīl are of little importance beside rice. No rain fell from September to the end of the year and the spring crops were also very poor. A severe famine thus became inevitable. The late Sir D. Ibbetson was then head of the Province, and under his direction preparations for relief were begun in ample time and extended as the occasion for them arose. Village relief was given out in September 1899 and village works were started in all parts of the District to provide labour pending the completion of the Public Works organisation. Nine regular work-camps had been opened by December. The rush on the works at this time was overwhelming, and though seven new charges had been added by the end of January, the numbers on each work rose to 8000 or 10,000. Free admission was stopped for nearly two months and applicants for work were referred to Civil officers, while the Public Works Department organised new camps. Finally 28 charges were opened in May 1900. The earthwork for the Bilāspur-Mungelī feeder line was carried out and ballast was broken for the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. The Pandaria-Kotā road was completed and a new road was made from Nipania to Loharsī. Several other roads were constructed or gravelled. A large number of small works were carried out under Civil officers consisting almost entirely in the construction and improvement of tanks both for drinking-water and for irrigation. The number of persons employed on village works rose at one time to 87,000 and

The famine of 1900.

altogether 663 tanks were constructed or improved. Grass-cutting operations were undertaken during the early stages of the famine, advances were made to the *patels* or headmen, who paid for the grass at a fixed rate which was first fixed at 15 bundles for a pice and afterwards reduced to ten. The cost to Government was about Rs. 20,000, and the grass was given out for making huts on relief works and to needy cultivators for their cattle. The fodder famine which had been anticipated in some quarters was not however experienced and very little of the grass could be sold. Relief was given to weavers in Bilāspur, Mungelī, Chāmpa, Bīja, Tarengā, Nargorā, Akaltarā, Pandaria and Nawāgarh. Middlemen were usually employed, who gave thread to distressed weavers selected by Relief Officers and bought their products at the rate of 4 annas a *dhoti* or loin-cloth. The bulk of the cloth was purchased by the Charitable Committee, the largest number of weavers employed at one time being about 1600. Kitchens for distribution of cooked food were opened at an early stage of the famine and their number was gradually increased until in the rains this became the principal form of relief : in August 1900 a total of 719 kitchens were open and 144,000 persons were receiving cooked food. The kitchens were managed by village proprietors, schoolmasters or police officials and in a few cases by paid clerks. Many proprietors and schoolmasters devoted great attention to the work and took pride in the efficient management of their kitchens. Village relief by cash doles was given on a fairly large scale at the beginning of the famine when a sufficient quantity of work could not be provided and never assumed such importance again, the distribution of cooked food from kitchens being substituted for it.

Statistics of the famine.

163. Relief measures lasted from September 1899 to December 1900 and the maximum number of persons assisted was 281,000 or 24 per cent. of the population in May 1900, the total expenditure being Rs. 48 lakhs. Besides this nearly three

lakhs were distributed from the Charitable Fund and five lakhs given out in loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act. Practically the whole land-revenue demand was suspended. The missionaries resident in the District rendered the most cordial and effective co-operation in the work of relief.

The mortality for the year 1900 was 43 per mille, a rate far from excessive. The death-rate rose during the hot weather on account of cholera and fell again in the rains, a sure indication that there was no substantial deterioration in the physical condition of the people. The average price of rice during the year 1900 was 11½ seers or about a seer cheaper than in Raipur. In the last months of 1899 it was as high as 10 seers but was brought down by the imports of Bengal rice. The price of wheat was also 10 seers.

Subsequent seasons.

164. After the famine of 1900 the District had a good harvest in 1901, but in the following year 1901-02 the later rainfall was insufficient and the cold weather nearly rainless. Both the rice sown on yellow soils and the spring crops were somewhat poor. A little relief was given in the hot weather in the Jānjgir tahsīl. In the following year 1902-03 a long break in the monsoon occurred from the last week of July to the last week of August, and this was aggravated by the early cessation of the rains in September. The crop gave only half an average outturn, the worst tracts being to the south of the District. Work was provided on some irrigation tanks by grants to the proprietors and about a quarter of the land-revenue was suspended and village relief was given. A large number of labourers, some 10,000 in all, went to Bengal to work on the extension of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway from Sīni. The mortality was absolutely normal and no real distress was experienced.

The next two seasons yielded beautiful harvests, but in 1905-06 the rainfall was again precarious and short and the crops were poor. Relief given was by way of opening

tank and road-works. After an interval of a year another bad season followed in 1907-08, again produced by the combined late arrival and early departure of the monsoon. The rice crop was only about half an average, but no serious distress was experienced. Village relief was organised, special works opened and loans were extensively given. The long catalogue of poor and bad harvests recorded in this chapter has sufficiently shown the instability of the rainfall, especially in the all-important late period of September and October, and the necessity of supplementing the natural supply with artificial storage by means of tank irrigation. This policy has now been definitely adopted by Government, though progress in this District is likely to be slow for the next 20 years, and it may be hoped that the future history of the District will be less marked by years of scarcity and famine.

General remarks on famine.

165. Since the second great famine in the year 1899-1900 the District has suffered from three years of distinct scarcity in 1902-03, in 1905-06 and 1907-08, but the scarcity was less widespread and little difficulty was experienced in meeting it. But apart from that, the circumstances of the District have changed as they have in many other Districts of the Province. There are now fewer labourers, as their numbers were most affected by the mortality and emigration of the great famines. The level of prices is very much higher and there is no panic-striking rise of prices on a failure of harvests. For the past three or four years prices have been at famine level ordinarily. The highest level of prices reached in 1897 (8 seers to the rupee), and that for a short time only, ruled for months together in 1908 and was not specially significant. People have learned to keep something in hand and temporary emigration is now annual. Labourers and small tenants (Chamārs especially) go yearly after harvest to find employment and return in June in time to sow. They find their way to

Kharagpur (for the coal mines), to Calcutta docks and even so far as the Hyderābād coal mines. When the harvest fails the number of emigrants increases largely.

In the first Settlement Report it was remarked that the great need of the District was private irrigation works and people are now learning that it is necessary to make better provision against the fickleness of the September rainfall chiefly by constructing large embankments to irrigate rice and ensure *rabi* sowings. Agriculturists, able to construct such works, find it difficult in years of plenty to get sufficient labourers, and take advantage of a year of scarcity to get such works done. There is thus a very much larger number of labourers provided for by private works.

The zamīndāris usually do better in years of scarcity than the *khālsa* portion of the District. Much of the area sown is sown with light millets which ripen early, the rice is mostly of the light varieties and moreover sown in valleys which are irrigated naturally. The jungles produce lac, *harrā*, mahuā, resin and such like crops, which even in ordinary years add considerably to the resources of the people, and the price of such products in recent years has risen considerably. But lac and mahuā especially are fickle crops, and when they fail in addition to the ordinary crops, the administration of relief in the zamīndāris is a more difficult problem than in the *khālsa*. There is not the same inclination as in the *khālsa* to improve their property on the part of those who have rights. Moreover, most of the villages are in possession of lessees who have no security of tenure. Private works are therefore very scarce. The people have not learnt to migrate, as those in the *khālsa* have, and will not go far to any work. Digging and stonebreaking they particularly dislike and rather than face such work, even though it is available within a day's walk, they will remain patiently at home to starve.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

Early revenue history.

166. Very little is known of the revenue administration of the District under the Haihayavansī rulers. The country appears to have been divided into tāluks held by relations or influential followers of the Ratanpur dynasty, and the tāluks were made up of a number of villages each held by farmers who paid the rents collected from the cultivators to the tālukdārs, who in turn remitted a percentage of their collections to the Rājā at Ratanpur. A revenue paper of the time of the Rājā Kalyān Sahai (1560 A.D.) represents the revenue collections of the Chhattīsgarh kingdom to have amounted to over seven lakhs of rupees, and the details for the old Bilāspur District are as follows :—

Pargana.	No. of villages.	Annual revenue collections.
		Rs.
Bilāspur	941	1,19,532
Mungelī	482	65,000
Seorīnarāyan... ...	145	33,300
	1568	2,17,832

In 1740 tne Chhattīsgarh country was conquered by the Marāthās, and in 1758 the administration of the country was personally assumed by Bimbāji Bhonsla, the younger brother of Raghujī I, Rājā of Nāgpur. Though nominally subject to the Nāgpur dynasty he was virtually independent and

maintained a separate court and army at Ratanpur. He died in 1788 and was nominally succeeded by Yenkoji, the younger brother of Raghujī II of Nāgpur. This prince, however, resided at Nāgpur and never regularly entered into the government of the country, which remained in the hands of Anandi Bai, widow of Bimbāji. The Sūbahs or Governors of the province were nominally subordinates of Yenkoji, but in practice they took all their orders from Anandi Bai. This state of affairs continued until the death of Anandi Bai at the beginning of the nineteenth century, after which event the administration of the country was entrusted to a succession of Sūbahs appointed by the Nāgpur Government but after their appointment subjected to practically no control. Their tenure of office was however extremely short, and their main object appears to have been to enrich themselves as speedily as possible before they were superseded by some new favourite of the Nāgpur Rājā. The Chhattīsgarh country under their methods of administration was described by Colonel Agnew, who became Superintendent of Chhattīsgarh in 1818 when the administration of the Nāgpur kingdom was assumed by the British Government during the minority of Raghujī II, as 'One uniform scene of plunder 'and oppression uninfluenced by any consideration but that 'of collecting by whatever means the largest amount possible.' These conditions resulted in considerable agricultural deterioration. Villages were deserted and cultivation decreased, with the result that during the ten years previous to 1818 the revenue collections did not exceed Rs. 3,60,000 as compared with Rs. 7,00,000 in the best days of the Haihayavansī Rājās.

The system of assessment in force when the country was taken under British management was as follows. The province under the charge of the Sūbah was divided into several parganas administered by officials subordinate to the Sūbah called Kamaishdārs. The pargana was again divided into villages each in the charge of a *gaontia* or headman,

usually an influential cultivator, who made himself responsible for the collection of the village assessment, and received in remuneration for his services one plough of land revenue free in every eight paying revenue to Government, and an allowance for village expenses of one plough of land in sixteen, which was sown with his own seed but was tilled by the village community. He also received some trifling dues on the sale of agricultural produce in his village.

The revenue assessment was subjected to annual revision, and the total demand from each province was fixed in accordance with instructions from Nāgpur. The Sūbah apportioned it between the various parganas in the light of the previous year's collections. The pargana assessment was apportioned between the various villages by the Kamaishdār and the distribution of the village assessment was left to the *gaontia* and cultivators to settle among themselves.

The methods by which the revision of settlement was carried out are described in the Settlement Report of 1868 quoting Sir Richard Jenkins' Report on the Nāgpur territories (1827) as follows :—

Collection of revenue.

167. 'In the end of August, the Sūbahdār of the 'District despatched *tākids* to Kamaishdārs of parganas, directing them to 'collect one-third of the annual revenue, according to the 'assessment of the last year, and to remit the amount to 'the public treasury before the 5th Ashvin (October). On 'receipt of these orders, the Kamaishdārs immediately 'despatched *chitthīs* to each *patel* or *gaontia* directing them 'to repair to the *kasbah* for the purpose of settling the *sāl*, 'or annual assessment, and to bring with them the instalment then due.

Mode of increase.

168. 'The *patels* and *gaontias*, complying with these 'directions, assembled at the *kasbah*. 'If the Kamaishdār thought a village 'could pay more than it had done in the preceding year, he 'demanded about double the increase he expected, and, after

'a good deal of discussion, concluded an agreement with the '*gaontia* or *patel* for the current year, taking from the latter 'what was called a *wā-adā purzā*, or bond in which the amount 'of assessment agreed upon was particularised, and an engage- 'ment entered into for its payment before the expiration 'of the year in certain *kists* or instalments. It also 'contained an agreement to pay such a further sum as the 'Sūbahdār or Sarkār might impose on the country generally. 'Ten or twelve days were then demanded and allowed for 'collecting and paying the *kist* already due, after which the '*patels* and *gaontias* returned to their villages. On these 'occasions, and whilst discussing the amount of assessment, 'they made various representations, such as that their lands 'had fallen out of cultivation from epidemics amongst the ryots 'or their cattle, that the season had been bad, that disturbances 'had prevented the labours of the field, etc. Of these the 'Kamaishdārs who were most attentive to their duty took 'notes, which, in some cases, they made the *gaontias* sign.

Balances.

169. 'Thus one-third of the revenue, corresponding 'generally in the total amount from 'each pargana, but not in the assess- 'ment on each village, with the assessment for the last year, 'was collected and paid into the treasury before the Dasahra '(September or October). If any remained due by the 'payment at that festival, the Sūbahdār wrote letters urging 'its immediate payment, and if they were not attended to, he 'gave a *berrat*, or order, on the Kamaishdār to send troops or 'others who exacted payment. The second instalment, also 'of one-third, was collected by a precisely similar process, 'except that Kamaishdārs sent the revenue peons under their 'authority, who are in most parts of this province called '*butkars*, sometimes with *chits*, sometimes without, to 'receive the amount from each *patel* or *gaontia*, and did not 'summon them to the *kasbah;* the 5th of Pūs (January) 'being the date within which it was to be paid into the 'treasury.

Kamaishdārs' tours.

170. 'Between the collection of these two *kists*, the 'most active and zealous of the 'Kamaishdārs made a tour of their 'parganas, in order that they might be prepared on the 'coming of the Sūbahdār to give him the fullest information, 'particularly as to the truth or otherwise of the various repre-'sentations made to them by the *patels* and *gaontias*, of 'which, in settling the *sāl*, they had taken notes, and had 'allowed to influence them in reducing or increasing that, so 'as to fall short of, or exceed the assessment of the past year. 'The third instalment or the remaining third was payable on 'the 5th of Chait (April) and was collected in the same 'manner as the second.

Sūbahdār's visits.

171. 'The Sūbahdār, having received the second instal-'ment of the revenue, commenced his 'tour generally about the end of January. 'He previously apprized the Kamaishdārs of his approach 'and directed them to assemble all the *patels* and *gaontias*. 'He visited each *kasbah* of the pargana. On arriving he 'called upon the Kamaishdārs and Farnavīses (accountants) 'for the *kachchā* account of the collections made in the last 'year, and, having received them, he heard in public *kachahri* 'all that the *patels* or *gaontias*, or ryots might wish to state. 'From their representations, from the report of the Kamaish-'dārs, from his own public and secret enquiries, and advert-'ing to the orders he had received from Nāgpur, he deter-'mined whether to confirm or alter (which he was understood 'to have the power of doing) the *sāl* settled by the Kamaishdār. 'When an increase was thought necessary, as was generally 'the case, that was enforced more by the weight of the 'Sūbahdār than by any compulsory measures, and was seldom 'carried into effect, without the consent, although perhaps 'yielded reluctantly, of the *patels* and *gaontias*. If any 'particular *gaontia*, however, would not come into the general 'arrangement and complained of the sum at which his village 'was assessed, the Sūbahdār instituted an enquiry, which

'enabled him to compare the payments it had made in the 'past year, with those made by the neighbouring villages; 'he then ascertained their relative states, and decided upon 'the representation by the result. If that was not satisfac- 'tory to the complainant, the village was offered to another, and 'where a candidate stood forward, which was generally pre- 'arranged beforehand, the objection was either withdrawn, 'as was commonly the case, or the *gaontia* was changed.

His accounts.

172. 'Thus the *bāki* account and whole assessment of 'the current year was finally fixed, and 'a copy of the *thahrao*, or settlement 'entered in the *daftars*, was taken by the Farnavīs of the par- 'gana. In it was stated the *bāki* from the last year, the total 'revenue for the current year, the instalments in which it was 'to be paid, the expenses allowed for the *māl mazkūr*, the 'deduction for *mukāsa* villages, *dharmādeo*, *devasthān* and '*nemnuks*, the amount which had already been paid to the 'Sarkār and the balance that would remain due. For this latter 'sum, the Kamaishdār's receipt, payable within a limited time, 'was taken. The complaints of ryots against *patels* and '*gaontias* were also attended to by the Sūbahdār, but what the 'latter might have improperly collected was appropriated by 'the Government, and was not returned to the aggrieved party. 'Complaints of oppression and on all other points were like- 'wise heard, investigated, and redressed, to the extent which 'accorded with the views and habits of the Sūbahdār.

Procedure with the people.

173. 'All these matters having been gone through, the 'Sūbahdār addressed the cultivators 'and others assembled in the *kachahri*, 'in terms of encouragement, telling the 'former the amount at which the whole pargana had been 'assessed, for it does not appear to have ever been the practice 'to inform each *patel* or *gaontia* of the exact sum his village 'was to pay, although he might by attending the *kachahri* 'pick up that information. He then dismissed them, sometimes 'giving them all *pān;* at others, that form was omitted; but

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'to the head *patels* and *gaontias* he always gave cloths, informing the rest that a remission of one and seven-eighths per cent. on the *ain ānk*, about two-fifths of the whole revenue, would be granted them in lieu of *sirpaos*, as this annual present of cloths is here termed.

His responsibility.

174. 'Thus the Sūbahdār completed his tour in eight or ten weeks, when he commenced to close the annual accounts and to prepare those to be sent to Nāgpur. He also took similar measures to those before described, for realising the last *kist*. On the expiration of the *fasli* year in June, he sent off *tākids* to call the Farnavīses of parganas with the accounts of the year. On their arrival they were compared with the accounts of the Sūbah, differences explained and reconciled, the expenditure of Kamaishdārs finally examined, and their receipts required, payable in a certain time, or an order given upon them for all sums not admitted, as well as for any balance of revenue remaining due, unless they had applied for an extension of time in favour of certain individuals, whose particular circumstances prevented them from immediately liquidating the demands against them, and could state that they were in possession of their receipts for the amount, in which cases from one to three months were granted for the recovery of such sums.'

Apportionment of the village assessment.

175. The apportionment of the revised village demand among the ryots was carried out in the following manner. The revised revenue demand was not announced to the *gaontias* until seven months of the year had passed, and until two instalments of revenue, the amounts of which were based on those of the preceding year, had been actually paid by them. It was necessary therefore to devise a system by which the relative responsibility of each ryot for the payment of the revenue could be fixed irrespectively of the amount of which such payment might consist. In the Nāgpur country the desired result was attained by giving a proportionate

value to each field in the main portion of the village lands, which represented its revenue-paying capacity in relation to the other fields of the village. This was called its *ain*, and was ordinarily expressed in annas or in cowries per rupee. In Chhattisgarh, on the other hand, each of the more well established ryots of the village made himself responsible for a share in the revenue proportionate to the number of 'ploughs' of land which he held; or in the words of Sir B. Fuller in his note on the Land Revenue Settlements of the Central Provinces (1886)—'In Nāgpur a man paid 'according to the *ains* of his fields; in Chhattīsgarh he held 'fields according to the *ains* of himself.' A 'plough' of land was an elastic measure, the actual extent of which varied largely in different tracts, but which was intended to represent the area which one plough and four oxen could cultivate. In most of Chhattisgarh in general, and in the east and the centre of the Bilāspur District in particular, there is considerable diversity of soil, and in order to ensure fair distribution it was necessary that each 'plough' should contain samples of all the various sorts of soil which the village lands comprised. The village lands were accordingly divided into blocks, each of which was considered to be of uniform value; a certain proportion of each of these blocks was appropriated by the *gaontia* for his own cultivation, and the rest was divided by the ryots among themselves in accordance with the number of 'ploughs' of land for which each was responsible. Besides the better established ryots of the village there were a number of others who were unable to make themselves responsible for a share of the assessment, but held land broken up from waste outside of the main cultivated area of the village, for which they paid rent in cash or kind. As cultivation expanded and these men advanced in the world, and desired to come in as sharers in the revenue responsibility of the village, and as the multiplication of families and other vicissitudes brought about changes in the numbers and status of the better established ryots, the distribution of the land by

degrees became inequitable. On this being represented to the *gaontia*, he, in consultation with the ryots, made a new distribution of the village lands. This custom of periodical redistribution, locally known as *lākhabānta*, could only have been possible in a tract where the supply of land was much greater than the demand for it, and where little attachment to it was felt by its holders; and the people of Chattisgarh were described, by Sir Richard Jenkins in 1827 as 'less attached to 'the soil and more migratory than is commonly the case in 'other parts of India.' It has long since died out under the influence of competition and the grant of definite rights in definite areas, but it has left a legacy of holdings scattered in small plots all over the village which are most noticeable at the present day.

Modifications by British regency and subsequent settlements until 1868.

176. The modifications of the Marāthā revenue system introduced by the British regency in 1818 mainly took the form of the abolition of supplementary revenue demands forming no part of the regular assessment, the fixation of the times for the payment of the instalments at periods convenient to the ryots. the grant of receipts for payment to the *gaontias*, the abolition of the revenue officials' unauthorised perquisites and the fixation of their salaries, which, in the case of the Kamaishdār, amounted to one and a half per cent. on the gross collections. No radical change of the method of assessment was attempted, owing to the fact that it was then expected that the British administration would only be temporary. During the currency of the protectorate the revenue collections of the *khālsa* of the District rose from Rs 95,935 in 1818 to Rs. 99,285 in 1829. On the termination of the British protectorate the village assessments were generally light, for, inasmuch as the total cash receipts of the village were generally appropriated by the government, and the village profits were mainly confined to the *gaontia's* home farm, there was little outside competition for villages, and undue severity of assessment would

have resulted in relinquishment in view of the absence of attachment by the people to the soil. After the resumption of the administration by the Rājā Raghujī II they increased from Rs. 1,08,625 in 1830 to Rs. 1,46,867 in 1854, when the District lapsed to the British Government. On the occurrence of the latter event, the difference in value between the Nāgpur and the Company's rupees produced an apparent decrease of the assessment to Rs. 1,22,016. Thereafter three summary settlements at intervals of three years enhanced the demand to Rs. 1,43,202. In order to get the total assessment of the District before the first regular settlement of 1868, there must be added to this figure the sums of Rs. 7968 being the assessment of the Bhutia and Sarsīwa tracts transferred from the Sambalpur District in 1865, and Rs. 13,495 being the assessment of the zamīndāris. The latter were held on light quit-revenues more of the nature of feudal tribute than of land revenue. The incidents of their tenure have been described elsewhere and need not be enlarged upon here. Their payments were fixed at the sum above-mentioned by the British Superintendent of Chhattīsgarh in 1820, and were not revised until the settlement of 1868.

The first regular settlement.

177. The total revenue demand of the Bilāspur District as then constituted thus amounted to Rs. 1,64,921 before the first regular settlement. The operations then undertaken under the charge of Mr. J. W. Chisholm included in the *khālsa* the delimitation and survey of each village, the classing of the soil on a simple system, and the preparation of an exhaustive record of rights In pursuance of the decision of Government to confer proprietary rights on the village *gaontias*, who had hitherto been, as their alternative name of *mālguzārs* implies, more or less in the position of mere revenue farmers, enquiries were instituted in each village with a view to ascertaining the person or persons entitled to the grant; and the person or persons, in whose favour a finding was arrived at, was or were given a formal

patent conferring proprietorship upon him or them. The length of the tenure of his holding by each ryot was also investigated, and as a result of the enquiry he was invested with status as an absolute occupancy, occupancy, or ordinary tenant as the case might be; or, in cases where the immemorial character of his tenure or other special circumstances gave him a claim to the proprietorship of his holding superior to that of the *gaontia* of the village in which it was situated, he was declared to be a plot-proprietor. An administration paper was also drawn up for each village setting forth the system of village management and of the division of the profits, the conditions of rent or revenue-free assignments, the respective rights of the proprietors and tenants with regard to the principal matters of every day importance to the village community, and details of special village customs. The conferral of fixity of tenure coupled with the increasing demand for land as the area of waste diminished, has entirely changed the attitude of the people towards the land. The custom of *lākhabāta* had entirely disappeared before the second settlement in 1888, and the remarks in the 1868 Settlement Report on the unsettled nature of cultivation in this District are now matters of curious historical interest. Simultaneously with the progress of settlement, enquiries were instituted into the title to the large waste areas which existed in the north of the *khālsa*, and proprietary right was only conferred in respect of the cultivated area of each village, together with an additional area of waste sufficient for the requirements of the people. The excess waste areas which amounted to 443,500[1] acres or 7 per cent. of the total area of the District, were constituted Government forest.

Revision of revenue assessment.

178. The revision of the revenue assessment was carried out by a modification of the *à priori* methods of the Marāthā Government. An aggregate revenue was calculated for

1. As then approximately measured. The exact area as ascertained at the forest survey carried out in the concluding years of the 19th century was 425,546 acres.

the pargana or group by the application of an all-round average rate per acre which was arrived at by enhancing the acreage incidence of the existing revenue to a degree which seemed warranted by the appreciation of the value of agricultural produce since the last revision, and by the circumstances of the tract. The assessment of the pargana was then distributed over its component villages by means of soil rates, which were based upon the relative productiveness of the various classes of soil as ascertained from the statements of the people and by actual experiment. These rates, modified where necessary in view of special village conditions, were applied to the areas of the different classes of soil in cultivation in each village, and the result was to give the revised village assessment. This having been determined, the Settlement Officer proceeded to fix the revised rents payable by each tenant to the proprietors, having regard to the soils included in his holding and his own financial status. The fixation was carried out in the villages in the presence of *mālguzār* and tenant, and was generally arrived at by mutual agreement, rents being only fixed judicially in case of dispute.

The zamīndāri settlement.

179. In the zamīndāris no detailed survey was attempted except in Kanteli which is completely surrounded by, and similar to, the *khālsa*. Each estate was demarcated, and a rough map on a small scale was prepared, showing the principal physical features of the tract and the positions of the various villages. Estimates of the area in cultivation were prepared, and to this area was applied a low acreage rate from which was deduced an estimate of the revised rental valuation of each village. Half of this sum, unless special circumstances rendered modification necessary, was taken as the full demand or *kāmiljamā* of the village, which the zamīndār actually received from inferior proprietors, and might expect to receive from villages held by lessees. These village *kāmiljamās*, together with the rental valuation of the zamīndārs' own home farm, formed the estimate of their regular income

from land, the assessment imposed on which absorbed from about 25 per cent. to 33 per cent. of the estimated receipts. In addition to these the zamīndārs derived considerable incomes from their forests, and from various miscellaneous sources of revenue, such as excise and *pāndhri* (or a sort of income-tax), which, in view of their semi-independent status, they had from time immemorial been allowed to appropriate by the Government, their lump annual *takolī* or tribute releasing them from any further contributions under these heads. It was ruled that they should continue to reap the advantage of administering these miscellaneous items of revenue, and that the proportion fairly realisable by the State should be included in their revised *takolī*. To attain this end these items of income were assessed at 50 per cent. of the average net assets.

The settlement operations, besides the re-assessment of the revenue demand, included enquiries into the claims of the village lessees holding from the zamīndārs to protection from arbitrary eviction. In 231 villages they were granted the status of inferior proprietors, mainly on the ground, either of relationship to the zamīndārs, or of having founded their villages or held them uninterruptedly for long periods. In 65 villages they were created plot-proprietors of their home farm, and in 93 were declared to be entitled to the rights of occupancy tenants in their home farm in the event of future dispossession from the lease of the village.

The tāhuts.

180. Besides the zamīndāris there were two large estates in the District, namely Lormi and Tarengā, called *tāhuts*, which were held on conditions somewhat similar to those of the *tālukdāri* tenure. These estates were included in the *khālsa*, and were settled village by village in the same manner as ordinary mālguzāri villages, and the *tāhutdārs* were liable to pay the full revenue demand assessed. In the case of Tarengā the estate was, in accordance with family custom, declared to be impartible for so long as the then *tāhutdār's* family held it. No such restriction was imposed on the subdivision of the Lormi

estate. In these estates and in the rest of the *khālsa* the claims of village lessees to protection were enquired into. In 125 villages they were created inferior proprietors, and in 111 were declared to be entitled to absolute occupancy rights in their home farm in the event of dispossession from their leases. The general result of the revision of settlement was to enhance the revenue demand of the *khālsa* from Rs. 1,51,170 to Rs. 2,51,934, and that of the zamīndāris from Rs. 13,495 to Rs. 25,077. In the *khālsa* the revised demand absorbed 57 per cent. of the assets and the incidence of revenue per cultivated acre was 4 annas 1 pie; while the incidence per acre of the payments of plot-proprietors and tenants were respectively R. 0-5-2 and R. 0-7-3.

The second regular settlement.

181. The settlement of 1868 expired in 1888 and in the enquiries preliminary to its revision, it was found that the 1868 settlement maps, which had to start with been prepared without a traverse, had not been brought up to date, and that the annual village papers were unreliable and defective, and it was decided to resurvey the *khālsa*.

The survey was made by the Survey of India, who in this District not merely laid down a traverse but also carried out the details of the cadastral survey. The operations lasted from 1884 to 1889, and their result was to give this District an unusually accurate set of maps. Attestation was started in 1886 and was completed in 1890. The operations were started by Mr. L. S. Carey, but he was shortly afterwards transferred to Raipur and the settlement was continued and completed by Rai Bahādur Purshottam Dās. The records prepared at survey were scrutinised by the settlement staff, and the usual system of soil classification was adopted, the simple scale of soil-factors adopted in the homogeneous tract of Mungelī being very considerably elaborated in the more diverse areas of the Bilāspur and Seorīnarāyan tahsīls. The method of assessment employed was that now universally adopted, by which the revenue assessment is built up *a posteriori*

on the basis of the revised rental demand and valuation of home farm, and the miscellaneous receipts of the village proprietors.

It was discovered that the acreage incidence of the payments of protected tenants had risen considerably since the 1868 settlement, despite the legal prohibition of the enhancement of the rents of absolute occupancy tenants and the restriction imposed by law on the enhancement of the rents of occupancy tenants during the currency of the settlement. The acreage incidence of absolute occupancy rents was found to have risen from R. 0-7-6 to R. 0-8-4 and that of occupancy rents from R. 0-7-3 to R. 0-8-4. These results were due to extensive rent concealment practised at the 1868 settlement which was subsequently discovered. The spontaneous rise of the acreage incidence of ordinary rents was from R. 0-7-1 to R. 0-9-3. This increase was in part due to rent concealment in 1868, and in part to natural development and an increased demand for land; for between 1868 and 1888 the area occupied for cultivation expanded from 51 per cent. to 68 per cent. of the total area. The effect of the revision of settlement on the payments of plot-proprietors was to raise their acreage incidence from R. 0-5 2 to R. 0-7-7. The acreage incidences of the rents of the various classes of tenants underwent the following enhancements :—

	From			To		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Absolute occupancy tenants ...	0	8	4	0	9	10
Occupancy tenants ...	0	8	4	0	9	7
Ordinary tenants	0	9	3	0	9	10
All classes of tenants ...	0	8	9	0	9	9

Village assets in 1868 stood as follows :—

	Rs.
Payments of tenants and plot-proprietors ...	3,31,158
Rental valuation of home farm and land let free of rent to privileged tenants ...	1,08,688
Miscellaneous income	3,290
Total ...	4,43,136

The revision of settlement raised them to the following figures :—

	Rs
Payments of tenants and plot-proprietors ...	6,80,641
Rental valuation of home farm and land held rent-free by privileged tenants	1,71,774
Siwai	25,549
Total ...	8,77,964

The revenue demand was enhanced from Rs. 2,51,737 (to which sum slight changes since 1868 had reduced the assessment then fixed) to Rs. 4,74,678, and its incidence per cultivated acre was raised from R. 0-4-1 to R. 0-5-6. The revised assessment absorbed 55 per cent. of the total assets.

Six small villages which had been excised from Government forest were surveyed and settled on the ryotwāri system. The assessment imposed on the occupied area amounted to Rs. 457 with an acreage incidence of R. 0-6-1.

The zamīndāris.

182. In the zamīndāris no survey was undertaken but a summary settlement was made on the basis of existing receipts. The payments to be made by inferior proprietors were determined, and in the case of villages held direct by the zamīndārs or by lessees the *kāmiljamās* were fixed at approximately 60 per cent. of the assets. The aggregate *kāmiljamās* of all villages amounted to Rs. 1,19,893 or 58 per cent. of the assets (Rs. 2,04,309). The revised land revenue *takolī* assessed on the zamīndārs amounted in the aggregate to Rs. 42,000 or 21 per cent. of the gross village assets and 35 per cent. of the revised *kāmiljamās*. In addition to the land revenue *takolī* the receipts of the zamīndārs from their forests, from their excise monopoly, and from *pāndhri* were separately assessed. The details of receipts and assessment are shown on the next page.

In the case of these items the settlement was declared liable to revision after three years, but as a matter of fact in

	Income.	Takolī.	Percentage of takolī on income.
	Rs.	Rs.	
Excise	11,861	5570	47
Forests ...	42,279	14,310	34
Pāndhri ...	1657	802	48

the case of the forest *takolī* no revision has been undertaken until the expiry of the land-revenue settlement. In two zamīndāris, Chāmpa and Kanteli, which were almost completely surrounded by *khālsa* villages and which formed undesirable centres of smuggling, the excise rights were resumed. In certain zamīndāris the police employed in the estate were maintained by the zamīndārs, in others by Government. From the owners of the latter estates an additional contribution towards the cost of the force amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 3960 was levied.

The total effect of the revision of settlement was thus to increase the demand from the zamīndārs from Rs. 25,077 to Rs. 66,642.

Revenue demand and cesses of the District.

183. The total revised revenue demand of the District thus amounted to Rs. 5,41,777. In addition to this sum the following cesses were levied from the proprietors:—Road, school, and post cess at $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the land revenue; additional rate (a contribution towards the expenditure on famine relief levied under Act X of 1878) at 2 per cent.; patwāri cess at 6 per cent. To the last two of these cesses the tenantry were also called upon to contribute. All tenants paid patwāri cess at the rate of 1 anna per rupee of their rents and the village proprietors were authorised to levy from absolute occupancy and occupancy tenants a contribution towards the additional rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on their rents.

Subsequent events of importance.

184. The principal events of importance since the 1888 settlement have been (1) the survey of the zamīndāris carried out between the years 1891 and 1897; (2) the revision of the settlement of the Bandhi group of the Mungelī tahsīl by Mr. C. E. Low in 1900, when a short term settlement resulting in a reduction of revenue by Rs. 936 was made in consequence of the serious deterioration of the tract in the famines; (3) the temporary abatement of rents and revenue in the neighbouring zamīndāri of Pandaria for similar reasons which resulted in the reduction of the zamīndār's *takolī* by Rs. 7000 for the three years 1900-01, 1901-02 and 1902-03; (4) the resumption of the excise rights previously held by most of the zamīndārs of the District in 1893, the abolition of *pāndhri* in 1903, the resumption in 1893 by Government of the management of the zamīndāri police in the estates which had previously maintained their own forces, and the levy of the contributions towards the maintenance of the force provisionally fixed by the Settlement Officer in 1888 in anticipation of this event (which was accompanied in some cases by reduction of the *takolī* as compensation for loss of *amour propre*); (5) the abolition of the additional rate in 1905 and the patwāri cess in 1906.

The effect of the second and fourth of the above changes and of other minor modifications of the demand due to land acquisition, etc., coupled with the fact that 37 villages of which the *kāmiljamās* were at settlement included in the total revised mālguzāri revenue demand were held either wholly or partially free of revenue, had by the revenue year 1904-05 been to reduce the total regular land-revenue demand actually realisable to Rs. 5,26,256 (zamīndāri Rs. 61,816, mālguzāri Rs. 4,63,975, ryotwāri Rs. 465). In 1905-06 the changes of the District boundary consequent on the transfer of the Sambalpur District to Bengal and the creation of the new Drug District which have been described in a former chapter resulted in the reduction of the demand to Rs. 4,08,816

(zamīndāri Rs. 56,009, mālguzāri Rs. 3,52,406, ryotwāri Rs. 401). This sum has since been increased by the announcement in 1906 of the revised assessment of the tract transferred to this District from Sambalpur in 1905, and by the lapse of certain revenue-free assignments; and the total regular land-revenue demand of the present Bilāspur District stood in 1907-08 at Rs. 4,16,533 (zamīndāri Rs. 56,009, mālguzāri Rs. 3,60,121, ryotwāri Rs. 403). The settlement of the District is at present under revision, but it is not as yet possible to give an accurate description of the result of the operations.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

Administrative Staff.

185. The District is included in the Chhattīsgarh Division and is under the supervision of the Commissioner of that Division. It is within the jurisdiction of the Divisional Judge of that Division who is also the Sessions Judge. It is administered by the Deputy Commissioner, who is also the District Magistrate and the District Registrar. He has also jurisdiction within railway limits in the Native States of Sakti and Raigarh on the east, and Rewah on the north and over European British subjects within the Native States of Sakti, Raigarh and Kawardhā. He has a sanctioned staff of four Assistants exercising full powers.

The District is divided into three tahsīls, Bilāspur, Jānjgir, Mungeli, each tahsīl being a Subdivision under an Assistant, who is the Subdivisional Magistrate. There was a redistribution of the tahsīls on the 1st January 1906 after the addition to this District of a tract from Sambalpur on the 16th October 1905 and the formation of the Drug District. Even after the redistribution, either of the two tahsīls (Bilāspur and Jānjgir) is as large in area and population as many Districts of the Central Provinces. The zamīndāri country has been much opened out of recent years in consequence of the construction of railways, and need is felt of additional tahsīli staff. For each tahsīl there is a Tahsīldār and Naib-tahsīldār The Bilāspur tahsīl contains 1118 revenue villages (*khālsa* 627, zamīndāris 491) of which 48 are uninhabited (*khālsa* 23, zamīndāris 25). The Jānjgir tahsil contains 1399 revenue villages (*khālsa* 760, zamīndāris 639) of which 62 are uninhabited (*khālsa* 18, zamīndāris 44). The Mungeli tahsīl contains 926 revenue villages (*khālsa* 565, zamindāris 361) of which 88 are uninhabited (*khālsa* 47, zamīndāris 41).

The Civil Court staff of the District consists of a District Judge and a Subordinate Judge at headquarters; at each tahsīli there is one munsiff and a second munsiff at Bilāspur. The Tahsīldārs are additional Judges in munsiffs' courts and the Assistants are Additional Judges in the Subordinate Judge's court for trial of civil cases between landlords and tenants under the Tenancy Act. There are benches of Honorary Magistrates at Bilāspur, Ratanpur and Seorīnarāyan; but at present the bench at Bilāspur does not sit from lack of suitable nominees. Besides these there are seven Honorary Magistrates, of whom four are zamīndārs. All but two of the Honorary Magistrates exercise 3rd class powers. Two exercise 2nd class powers. There is an Honorary Assistant Commissioner, who is also Additional Judge in the Subordinate Judge's court, and an Honorary Assistant District Superintendent of Police in the District. Recently a Deputy Superintendent of Police has been attached to the District. The Divisional Forest Officer is usually a member of the Provincial Service. He has charge also of the Sonākhān range, which is now in the Raipur District but was before the 1st January 1906 in Bilāspur. The Civil Surgeon is an officer of the Indian Medical Service. He is also the Superintendent of the Jail. There are two branches of the Public Works Department, with a Subdivisional Officer in charge of each—one for roads and buildings under the Executive Engineer of the Eastern Division, the other for irrigation under the Executive Engineer of the Mahānadi Division.

Land Record Staff.

186. The Land Record staff consists of—

1 Superintendent, 3 Assistant Superintendents, 18 Revenue Inspectors and 387 patwāris. There are 13 Revenue Inspectors and 275 patwāris in the *khālsa* portion of the District and 5 Revenue Inspectors and 112 patwāris in the zamīndāris. Eleven patwāris of the Pandaria zamīndāri and one of the Kanteli zamīndāri are under the *khālsa* Revenue

Inspector of Kunda. Three Kanteli zamīndāri patwāris are under the *khālsa* Revenue Inspector of Lormi. Six patwāris of the Chāmpa zamīndāri are under the *khālsa* Revenue Inspector of Bāraduār. The headquarters of the Revenue Inspectors are (1) in the Bilāspur tahsīl—Kandār, Bīja, Nargorā, Mastūri, Pendrā and Kendā with 95 *khālsa* patwārī circles and 36 zamīndāri circles; (2) in the Jānjgir tahsīl—Akaltarā, Dhardehi, Bāraduār, Jaijaipur, Chandarpur, Hasod, Chhuri and Korbā with 127 patwāri circles in *khālsa* and 41 in zamīndāris; and (3) in the Mungelī tahsīl—Sargaon, Kunda, Lormi, Pandaria with 53 patwāri circles in *khālsa* and 35 in zamīndāris. To each Revenue Inspector in the *khālsa* there is an average of 22 patwāris and in the zamīndāris an average of 18 patwāris. There are 3106 surveyed villages in the District for which land records are prepared: an average of nearly 7 to each patwāri in the *khālsa* and nearly 12 in the zamīndāris. In the *khālsa* each patwāri's circle contains on an average 4662 acres included in holdings and a total area of 6516 acres: in the zamīndāris each patwāri's circle on an average has a total area of 15,815 acres, of which 4864 acres are included in holdings. Patwāris receive Rs. 9 monthly, paid direct from the treasury. All but 61 get additional allowances of R. 1, Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 monthly. Besides, a certain sum in rewards for exceptionally good work is distributed yearly. In 1908 a sum of Rs. 285 was so distributed amongst 32 patwāris. Grain dues or direct collections by patwāris from tenants have never been customary in this District. Nor are any patwāris' posts hereditary. The patwāri has always been directly a Government servant. In this District as in Chhattīsgarh generally he formed no part of the village economy, and in 1854 on Chhattīsgarh being taken over by the British Government the necessity of filing village records led to the introduction of patwāris into the *khālsa* portion. Thirty patwāris were originally appointed, each having about 75 villages in his circle. At the first settlement in 1868, the *halkābandī* was revised and 90 patwāris were appointed for the *khālsa*

and a small supervising staff, the cost being defrayed by a 5 per cent. cess on the revenue of the village. The patwāris under the new arrangements had an average of 25 villages each in their circles.

At the re-settlement the staff was reorganised, the number of patwāris being largely increased, and much difficulty was experienced in finding and training candidates. From 1891 there were 315 patwāris with 11 Revenue Inspectors for the *khālsa* under the supervision of one Superintendent and one Assistant Superintendent, the cost being defrayed by a 6 per cent. cess on revenue paid by mālguzārs and a rate of 6 pies in the rupee of rental paid by tenants. In the zamindāris zamīndārs were called upon in 1881 in accordance with a condition of their tenure to submit annually village papers and they made their own arrangements to do so. The returns were unreliable and a *halkābandī* was prepared at the re-settlement in 1890 for the zamīndāris also, 78 patwāris and 4 Inspectors being appointed. Each zamīndār paid the cost for his estate, only recouping himself by a levy of 6 pies per rupee of rental and 6 per cent. of revenue from inferior proprietors. The staff was again revised in 1898 when one Inspector and 30 additional patwāris were appointed for zamīndāris. Additions were made in 1899 and in 1902 to the supervising staff and to the number of patwāris—the latter mostly in the zamīndāris—and the pay was raised. There were further changes consequent on the redistribution of Districts in 1905 and 1906. On the 1st April 1906 the patwāri cess was remitted. In the year 1904-05, that is, before the change in the District area, the demand on account of the cess was Rs. 59,326. The pay of patwāris was Rs. 53,672 and of the supervising staff Rs. 10,245. Owing to the generally small size of the fields in the District the patwāris' work is more than usually difficult and laborious. The patwāris are mostly foreigners, and as the people are generally ignorant possess even more local influence than is usual.

Crime.

187. Crime is not heavy in the District in proportion to the population and statistics show a very decided decrease since 1901 compared to the previous ten years. The average annual number of offences reported to the police in the years 1891 to 1900 was 2281, in the subsequent five years 1298, and 1104 in the three years since the redistribution of the District in 1906. The average number of cases not cognisable by the police was 624 for the ten years previous to the reduction of area of the District in 1906, and 515 for the subsequent three years. The bad famine years showed a large number of offences—2853 in 1900, 3134 in 1896 and 5168 in 1897. In 1896 and 1897 the criminal classes of the District got out of hand for a time, especially the Chamārs of the Mungelī tahsīl, who, ever ready on slight provocation to take to crime, formed organised gangs for levy of black-mail, poisoning and stealing cattle, committing dacoities and house-breakings. The District at one time had a bad name for cattle poisoning by Chamārs, but of recent years matters have much improved in this respect and this offence is not now especially common. The number of murders is generally large in the course of a year, but not proportionately large for the population of the District. The most general causes are love affairs and land disputes. Riots are not uncommon, the summary procedure of 'club law' to gain forcible possession of land being preferred to a tedious civil suit. Police indifference in the past has to some extent encouraged them. Cattle theft is another class of crime common in the District, the contiguity of many Native States and the passage of numerous Banjārā droves in the north affording facilities for it. The local criminal castes are Chamārs, mostly to the west, and Gāndas, mostly to the east of the District in the Chandarpur tract. Failure of crops easily leads to organised crime by either class. Good railway communication brings not infrequent visits of foreign professional criminals. The high road to Purī lies through the District and affords such

gentry an excellent disguise and excuse for wandering. Gangs of 'Jagannāthis' outside railway limits usually receive close attention from the local police. In years of scarcity, hunger occasionally drives the Korwās—the wild hillmen of Surgujā and Udaipur States on the north-west—across the border to commit grain thefts. The construction of railways has opened up the District and brought in a crowd of foreigners, mostly for legitimate trade. But many an up-country man, who lives by his wits, has found the District a happy hunting ground. Beyond occasionally lending a hand in a riot he usually is careful to keep clear of the police. But short of actual crime, there is no sort of rascality for which he is not ready. The 'pardeshi' is much feared by the indigenous people of the District, who are for the most part both timid and ignorant.

Civil litigation.

188. Bilāspur is not a litigious District. At present there is one civil suit instituted in the year for every 200 of the population. In the Central Provinces there are only three Districts with a smaller proportion than this and of these two Districts are in the Chhattīsgarh Division. The number of suits instituted used to be very much greater—the highest figure being 7951 in the year 1895. But there was a marked fall after 1898 due to the enactment in that year of the Central Provinces Tenancy Act, which curtailed considerably the powers of transfer of land. Since 1898 suits have increased again very largely and in the year 1908 4871 suits were instituted with a total value of Rs. 5,09,940 Most of this litigation is petty. As many as 1063 suits were for Rs. 10 and under, 85 per cent. of the suits were for Rs. 100 and less, 11 per cent. for over Rs. 100 and less than Rs. 500 and only 4 per cent. for over Rs. 500. Seventy-five per cent. of the suits are for money or movable property, the balance being made up of suits for rent, on mortgages, and for immovable property. Despite the large population of the District, hardly any District shows fewer suits for rent, only 216 being filed in 1908. The

settlement is of long standing and rents are very low and easily collected. Suits for immovable property have increased largely in the last four years, possibly in view of the impending revision of settlement. Mortgage suits have gradually decreased in number since the passing of the Tenancy Act of 1898. Of every 100 suits brought, only about 23 are contested, a smaller proportion than in most Districts of the Province. The Scheduled Districts' Act (Act XIV of 1874) applies to nine zamīndāris in this District, *viz.*, Pandaria, Pendrā, Mātin, Uprorā, Kendā, Lāpha, Chhuri, Korbā and Chāmpa. But all laws are in force there as in the *khālsa*, an exception being that immovable property cannot be sold in execution of a decree.

Registration.

189. The Deputy Commissioner has been District Registrar since the end of 1904; and since then the headquarters Sub-registrar has been empowered to register documents for the District Registrar and to do the routine work of the District Registrar's office. There are three sub-registrars under the District Registrar with offices at Bilāspur, Mungelī and Jānjgir. They receive a fixed salary and a commission of 3 annas on each document registered. The number of documents registered in 1890-91 was 905. There was a large increase in the years 1894-95 to 1898-99, the largest number registered being 1923 in 1897-98. The new Central Provinces Tenancy Act of 1898 caused a large decrease--the number of documents registered in 1899-1900 being 647. The average number registered yearly since is 742 and in 1908 801 documents were registered. Of these, 536 documents concerned immovable property of which the registration of 512 was compulsory by law and of 24 optional. Two hundred and fifty-five documents had to do with movable property and their registration was optional. Ten documents were wills and their registration was optional. The receipts from registration vary with the number of documents registered and the amount of their consideration money. In 1890-91 receipts were Rs. 3125. Since then the greatest

amount in one year has been Rs. 7134 in 1897-98, and the least Rs. 2518 in 1899-1900. Since 1899-1900 the average yearly receipts have been Rs. 3680. In 1908 the receipts were Rs. 4467.

Statistics of revenue.

190. The following statement shows the realisation of revenue in the District under the principal heads of receipt, at the end of the last three decades and during the years 1904-05 to 1907-08:—

Year.	Land Revenue.	Stamps.	Excise.	Forests.	Registration.	Income-tax.	Other receipts.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1880-81	2,80,545	25,008	75,614	17,184	952	...	...	3,99,303
1890-91	5,70,393	49,35[illegible]	1,08,717	26,485	3125	12,240	...	7,70,312
1900-01	5,75,721	52,673	93,049	20,045	2941	10,373	12,736	7,67,538
1904-05	5,90,133	51,122	1,34,289	24,727	2915	7472	13,658	8,24,316
1905-06	3,02,912	67,652	1,59,962	24,818	3648	7908	18,223	5,85,127
1906-07	5,11,753	62,658	1,58,382	35,814	3503	8574	29,835	8,10,519
1907-08	2,97,665	72,823	1,58,191	35,336	875	9281	21,324	5,98,495

In 1907-08 the treasury transactions were—

	Rs.
Total receipts of all kinds ...	20,49,400
Total charges of all kinds ...	20,38,700

Excise.

191. The excise income is derived from license fees for sale of foreign liquor, country spirit, *gānja* and opium, and from the duty on mahuā used at the sadar distillery and on drugs sold to licensed vendors. Formerly all zamīndārs had the control of the excise monopoly in their estates. The rights of the Kanteli zamīndāri were resumed at the first settlement (1868). Those of Chāmpa were resumed at the second settlement in 1890—compensation in the form of a specially low assessment of his land revenue being granted to the

zamīndār. These two zamīndāris are open tracts and lie amongst *khālsa* territory, and it was in the interest of the *khālsa* excise administration that their monopolies were resumed first. The monopolies of the other zamīndāris were continued at the settlement of 1890 and the zamīndārs were assessed in most cases at about 50 per cent. of their income from this source. The assessment was for three years only. In 1894 these monopolies also were resumed and the zamīndārs were granted compensation amounting to eight times the average net profits of the previous three years. All the zamīndārs accepted the compensation in 1894, except the zamīndār of Korbā, who did not agree till 1907. To soften the blow to their dignity caused by the loss of these privileges each zamīndār who accepted the compensation in 1894 was granted the farm of the excise monopoly in his estate for the remaining term of the settlement at an annual fee of one-tenth the amount of compensation granted to him. *Pattās* setting forth the conditions were granted to each zamīndār in 1894 for liquor and in 1896 for opium and *gānja*. The zamīndārs sublet their stills and shops; the number of such stills and shops is prescribed and they are subject to all rules as in *khālsa* and to supervision. Only Government opium and *gānja* may be sold The farm has been extended in 1902 with the extension of the term of the present settlement. As the zamīndār of Korbā refused to accept compensation in 1894, no farm was granted and the excise in Korbā zamīndāri was taken and has remained under direct management. The settlement of the zamīndāris is now under revision but the future excise management has not yet been decided. The zamīndārs of Korbā and Pandaria have recently sued Government for restoration of their excise rights.

Foreign and country liquor.

192. Receipts from foreign liquor are small, there being now only one shop in the town of Bilāspur and two public houses or refreshment rooms at two stations on the

railway. The license fees are fixed by Government and the demand in 1908-09 was Rs. 500. For manufacture and sale of country spirits the whole District except 462 square miles was up to 31st March 1908 under the outstill system. At Bilāspur there has been since 1897 a sadar distillery serving an area round Bilāspur town of 462 square miles In the year 1904-05 before the redistribution of the Districts of the Chhattīsgarh Division there were one sadar distillery and 13 subordinate shops, and 155 outstills serving 212 shops, all under direct management. In the zamīndāris under farm leased to zamīndārs there were 102 outstills serving 102 shops. In 1905-06 on the redistribution of the District, 22 outstills of the *khālsa* serving 41 shops were transferred from Sambalpur District and 26 *khālsa* outstills serving 40 shops and 10 zamīndāri outstills serving 10 shops were transferred to the Drug and Raipur Districts. Since then up to 31st March 1909 eleven stills and 30 shops all in the *khālsa* have been abolished, the total in 1908-09 being one sadar distillery serving 11 shops and 142 outstills serving 182 shops under direct management and under farm leased to zamīndārs 92 outstills serving 92 shops. From the 1st April 1909 to prepare the way for the ultimate introduction of the contract supply system the sadar distillery area has been extended to 1140 square miles, several outstills in the *khālsa* have been amalgamated to reduce competition in sales of liquors between adjacent lessees and the number of shops has been still further reduced. The number of stills and shops is now one sadar distillery with 43 shops, 70 outstills serving 117 shops, all under direct management and 92 outstills and 92 shops in farmed zamīndāris. Until recently temporary licenses were granted to licensees for sale in bazars in their circles. This custom has been discontinued and now temporary licenses for liquor, opium and *gānja* are only granted for the fair at Pīthampur, which lasts a week.

In the sadar distillery usually liquor is distilled of three strengths, about 25°, 50° and 60° under proof called respec-

tively *chaubāra*, *dobāra* and *rāsi*, the first two being principally for town consumption; the prices usually charged for a bottle are 14 annas, 10 annas and 3 annas respectively. In the outstills liquor is usually distilled of two strengths, *phūli* or *dobāra* abcut 35°—40° and *rāsi* about 60°—65° under proof, the prices for a bottle varying from annas 4 to annas 6 for *phūli* and about annas 3 for *rāsı*. All liquor distilled under license is distilled from mahuā flowers. In the eastern portion of the District, as in many parts of Bengal, a rice beer is made for private consumption by a few castes. This is called *pachwai* or *kusnā*. The beer is usually consumed at festivals, but the practice does not seem to be extending. The article has been exempted from the provisions of the Excise Act.

In the portion of the District where excise is directly administered there was in 1908-09 an average of one liquor shop for 3875 persons and for 22·5 square miles. In the farmed zamīndāris the average was one liquor shop for 1838 persons and 35·3 square miles. From the sadar distillery the average receipts from license fees for the five years 1904-05 to 1908-09 were Rs. 11,600 and from duty at 1½ annas per seer of mahuā Rs. 3968. Owing to more efficient management and closer supervision and also increased town population and higher wages the receipts have increased continuously during this period. In 1908-09 the receipts from license fees were Rs. 15,504 and from duty Rs. 4727. In that year 11,791 gallons of spirit were manufactured equal to 5613 proof gallons, 8·9 seers of mahuā on an average being required for the manufacture of each proof gallon. About two-thirds of the spirit is sold in the town shops. The total receipts from country spirit in the *khālsa* portion of the District increased rapidly from Rs. 21,637 in 1891-92 to Rs. 45,120 in 1895-96. The average yearly receipts of the next five years to the year 1900-01 were Rs. 22,079 only, the decrease being in outstill receipts which vary readily with good or bad seasons, and these five years included two very bad famines. The receipts rose continuously to Rs. 46,757 in 1905-06, when

the area of the District was reduced. Since then the increase has continued and in 1908-09 the receipts were Rs. 57,798.

Opium.

193. In 1904-05 there were 69 permanent opium shops in the *khālsa* portion of the District, a number which had continued for several years previously. There was a reduction of 8 on the redistribution of the District in the following year and 10 others have been abolished since. There are now (1909) 51 shops in the *khālsa* and 17 in the farmed zamīndāris or an average of one opium shop in the *khālsa* for 14,383 people and 83·6 square miles, and in zamīndāris one for an average of 9947 people and 151 square miles. Opium is usually sold in the town at the rate of about 10 annas per tolā weight and outside the town at 8 annas. The receipts from license fees for sale of opium vary with the prosperity of the District as do the receipts from country liquor though not quite to the same extent. From 1891-92 to 1895-96 there was a continuous increase from Rs. 15,313 to Rs. 25,855 which was the highest until last year (1908-09). The next six years saw a continuous decline to Rs. 12,253 and then a rapid recovery to Rs. 21,850 in 1905-06 In the three subsequent years despite the reduction of the area of the District and the raising of the duty from Rs. 22 to Rs. 23-8-0 per seer the average receipts were Rs. 18,980, and in 1908-09 they reached Rs. 26,286 and the demand for 1909-10 has risen to Rs. 28,575. The weight of opium actually consumed in the District in 1908-09 was rather over 58 maunds and the duty levied on it was Rs. 54,835, the total taxation per seer being nearly Rs. 36. In 1901-02 the area of the District being then 9 per cent. larger than now the amount consumed was 39½ maunds and in 1891-92 47 maunds. Fifteen maunds of opium were issued during 1908-09 to Feudatory States from the Bilāspur treasury and Rs. 12,229 realised.

Gānja and *bhang*.

194. In 1904-05 there were 64 *gānja* shops in the *khālsa* portion of the District and the same number had continued for several

years previously. By the reduction of the District area 7 were transferred to other Districts and subsequently the number was reduced to 48 in 1908-09, that is, one shop on an average for 14,665 people and 86·3 square miles. In the farmed zamīndāris there are 20 shops, an average of one for 8455 people and 162 square miles. *Gānja* is usually sold at about 4 annas per tolā in the town and 3 annas outside the town of Bilāspur. The receipts from license fees for sale of *gānja* have varied in the same way as those of opium, but the taxation has been raised from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 per seer in 1896-97 and from Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 per seer in 1901-02 and from Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 in 1906-07. The consumption of *gānja* fluctuates sharply with the prosperity of the people and the price at which it is sold, the drug being given up by consumers with comparative ease. The largest consumption in the District was 148 maunds in 1894-95 and the revenue raised on it was Rs. 27,205; the lowest consumption was nearly 44 maunds in 1902-03 and the revenue on it was Rs. 11,075. In 1908-09 the consumption of the District was 73 maunds and the revenue was Rs. 25,718.

There are three licensed vendors of *bhang*. In 1908-09 they paid Rs. 427 duty and Rs. 215 license fees and the consumption was nearly 5½ maunds.

The net revenue per 10,000 of the District population was Rs. 1739 from excise in 1908-09. For the Province the revenue per 10,000 in 1907-08 was Rs. 4381.

The excise staff was increased in 1906-07 and there are now nine Sub-Inspectors in the District: one of them is in subordinate charge of the District directly under the Deputy Commissioner.

The boundary of the District for more than half its length adjoins Native States. *Gānja* smuggling from some of them was common until recently, when *gānja* cultivation there was prohibited to the great advantage of the District revenue.

Stamps.

195. There are 49 unofficial licensed vendors of stamps, including schoolmasters, shopkeepers and one postmaster; at Bilāspur the vendor at the court building makes a living out of the sale of stamps alone. The discount paid to the licensees in 1908-09 was Rs 1549. The receipts in 1891-92 were from sale of document stamps Rs. 10,680 and of court fee stamps Rs. 41,729. These were rather higher than in the preceding years and continued to increase until 1895-96 when the receipts from document stamps were Rs. 19,843 and from court fee stamps Rs. 50,767. In 1896-97 receipts from document stamps rose sharply to Rs. 22,666, showing the effects of the famine of that year in making people borrow. Then followed a gradual decrease during the lean years when credit was difficult to get. The year of lowest sales was 1899-1900 when Rs. 12,135 were realised. Court fee stamp sales were not affected to the same extent and fluctuated sharply, apparently as people saw an opportunity of realising their debts. In the last three years the sales have more than recovered despite the reduced area of the District. In 1907-08 the sales of document stamps brought in Rs. 20,093 and of court fee stamps Rs. 52,730 In 1908-09 receipts from sale of document stamps were Rs 26,454 and of court fee stamps Rs. 54,616.

Municipalities.

196. There is only one Municipality in the District, that of Bilāspur. It was constituted in 1867. It contains parts of several villages, Lingia, Chātidih, Sarkandā, Kudhurdānd and land declared at the 1868 settlement to be *nazūl*. This land comprising the present *muhallās* of Chāta, Jarhābhāta, Masānganj, Khaparganj, Gondpāra, Purāni Lines together with Bilāspur village cover nearly the whole area within the Municipality. The population was 16,376 in 1901 and had increased from 11,122 in 1891. The town is growing. The railway community numbering some 2500 is outside the municipal limits and manages its own affairs. There are three wards—

old Bilāspur electing three members, Gol Bazār electing three members and Chāta electing two members. Besides the eight elected members, there are four members of the Committee nominated by Government. The Secretary is a paid servant of the Committee, and the President is sometimes an official and sometimes a non-official. The average receipts for the ten years 1891-92 to 1900-01 were Rs. 32,913 and for the next five years Rs. 35,433. In the last four years there has been a considerable increase of income and in 1908-09 the receipts were Rs. 47,498. The chief sources of municipal income are octroi in 1908-09 Rs. 26,628 net (after payment of refunds Rs. 9962), conservancy house tax Rs. 4275, municipal pounds Rs. 1371, school fees (nearly all from secondary schools) Rs. 2548, market rents Rs. 3081, fees on cattle registration Rs. 3071, contribution from Government Rs. 2000, and under all these heads except pounds there has been a considerable increase of recent years. The octroi schedule of rates was revised and the rates increased in 1904-05. The conservancy house tax was imposed in 1907-08 in place of the old poll tax to defray the cost of private house conservancy. A High School was started in 1904-1905 and an annual Government grant of Rs. 2000 towards it has been paid since. The High School building was then constructed at a cost of over Rs. 6000, the greater part of which was subscribed privately, the Government giving a grant of Rs. 1000. In 1908-09 the income per head of the census population was Rs. 2-14-5 and the incidence of taxation was R. 1-14-2. These figures are as high as those of any municipality which has no drainage or water-works. The municipal expenditure averaged for the decade 1891-92 to 1900-01 Rs. 32,915 and for the next five years Rs. 35,540. In 1908-09 the expenditure was Rs. 49,086. The principal items of expenditure were—General office establishment Rs. 2396, collection of taxes Rs. 3709, lighting Rs. 1367, conservancy Rs. 11,018, medical Rs. 4613, public garden Rs. 2095, road

Rs. 5537 and education Rs. 12,706 (of which Rs. 7966 is spent on secondary education). The Municipality contributes Rs. 500 to the cost of the veterinary dispensary. The balance of the Municipal Fund on the 1st April 1909 was Rs. 18,502. The High School and the public gardens are the luxuries of the Municipality. The expenditure has increased largely of recent years under most other heads, the largest increases being under 'conservancy,' 'roads' and 'medical.' The efficiency of the conservancy arrangements still leaves something to be desired. Plague preventive measures for the last two years have been costly. The town has been surveyed for drainage recently, but nothing has been decided yet. There are no water-works, but private wells are numerous, as the water level is close to the surface of the ground. The Municipality has incurred no loan. A Town Hall was built in 1895 at a cost of Rs. 12,376. The Municipality and District Council shared the cost and both occupy the building.

District Council.

197. The District Council was constituted on the 1st February 1885 under the Central Provinces Local Self-Government Act (Act I of 1883). It consists of 17 members elected by the Local Boards and 7 members nominated by Government. The Secretary is usually an official. Subordinate to it there are four Local Boards—Mungelī with control over the Mungelī tahsīl, Jānjgir with control over the *khālsa* portion of the Jānjgir tahsīl, Bilāspur with control over the *khālsa* portion of the Bilāspur tahsīl, and the Zamīndāri Local Board with control over the eight northern zamīndāris lying in the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls.

The Mungelī Local Board consists of 20 elected members and 5 members nominated by the Government.

The Jānjgir Local Board consists of 21 elected members with 5 members nominated by the Government.

The Bilāspur Local Board consists of 19 elected members with 5 members nominated by the Government.

In each the Tahsīldār is usually the President and the Naib-tahsīldār the Secretary.

The Zamindāri Local Board consists of 8 members—one representative of each of the component zamīndāris nominated by the Deputy Commissioner with the Deputy Commissioner as President and the Tahsīldār, Bilāspur, as Secretary. For the last ten years (1900—1909) the average annual receipts of the District Fund have been Rs. 86,628 and the expenditure Rs. 86,006. The receipts for 1908-09 were Rs. 1,20,728 including Rs. 18,493 advances and deposits, and the expenditure Rs. 1,24,331 including Rs. 15,702 advances and deposits, and the balance on the 31st March 1909 was Rs. 22,105.

The principal items of receipts in 1908-09 were—

	Rs.
Rates and Cesses	25,890
Pounds	24,389
Contribution for Education from Provincial Funds	27,000
Cattle Registration Fees	7118
Ferries	3480
Contribution from Provincial Funds for Civil Works	12,000

The principal items of expenditure were—

General Administration	3883
Pounds	9165
Education	43,441

(of which Rs. 33,910 were spent directly on primary education).

Contribution to Dispensaries ...	7119
Veterinary Dispensary	2213
Construction of pounds	7954
" of schools	12,112
" and repairs of wells ...	2307
Roads	12,862
Works Establishment	3059

The income of the Council has increased considerably in the last four years owing to the increased contribution from Government and to the great expansion of the receipts from cattle pounds and registration of cattle. These are the only sources of income at present which the Council can control directly, the others being mostly fixed or not liable to much variation. Formerly the Council paid a contribution to Provincial revenues of Rs. 11,945 for the upkeep of District roads maintained by the Public Works Department. From the 1st April 1908 this was remitted: the accounts were thus much simplified and the Council's income still further increased. The Provincial grant has been fixed at Rs. 39,000 for three years from the 1st April 1908. The Council has been able, from the generous grant from Provincial revenues of recent years, to increase the number of its schools, raise the pay of the schoolmasters, build a large number of new schools, expand its veterinary work, increase its works establishment, do something to keep its roads in order, and make some efforts to provide them with roadside avenues. From the 1st April 1908 greater responsibility was given to the Local Boards, that is, greater powers of control of expenditure in all branches except veterinary and education were delegated to them. Control of veterinary and education affairs still remains with the Council. Each Local Board is granted an allotment yearly, and within that allotment the Local Board is authorised to incur expenditure.

Allotments in 1908-09 were—

	Rs.
Bilāspur	22,832
Jānjgīr	19.002
Mungelī	15,874

The small sums spent by the Zamīndāri Local Board are included in the Bilāspur allotment, as it has not yet been found practicable to grant a separate allotment and a separate staff.

The average attendance at meetings is poor, and in a backward District such as this, little progress can be made without official stimulus.

Village Sanitation.

198. Before 1905 the old Act was in force in two villages only, Jānjgir and Ratanpur. The new Village Sanitation Act has been put in force in seven villages:—

Jānjgir (population 2257), Ratanpur (5479), Pendrā (2457), Gaurelā (1704), Takhatpur (2616), Mungelī (5907), Chāmpa (4315), and a proposal to introduce the Act into Pandaria is now being considered. In Gaurelā funds are raised by license fees levied from brokers and a tax on goods brought into the village; in the other villages, by a tax on incomes, and two villages, Mungelī and Takhatpur, have an income also from cattle registration at their bazars. In 1907-08 the income of the sanitation funds varied from Rs. 354 in Gaurelā to Rs. 1269 in Mungelī, and the expenditure varied from Rs. 308 in Jānjgir to Rs. 892 in Mungelī. The greater part of the expenditure is spent on conservancy establishment, but considerable sums are also spent at times on wells and village roads. In two other villages, Balodā, population 2603, and Chandarpur, population 1758, a conservancy establishment has been maintained at the cost of the residents in accordance with the rules framed under section 141 of the Land-Revenue Act. In 1907-08 the expenditure in Balodā was Rs. 347 and in Chandarpur Rs. 132.

District Sanitary Board.

199. Since the year 1890-91 54 new wells have been constructed at a cost to the District Council of Rs. 14,916 and 115 wells have been repaired at a cost of Rs. 6122. For the construction of new wells the villages formerly gave labour or materials, but this procedure produced so many difficulties in accounts and so much delay in the work that wells are now only constructed in villages which subscribe half the cost beforehand in cash. In 1908-09 the Government built two new wells in two of its ryotwāri villages.

Public Works.

200. There is a Subdivisional Officer for roads and buildings under the Executive Engineer of the Eastern Division at Raipur. The Bilāspur Subdivision corresponds with the old civil District of Bilāspur and consequently includes areas which now fall in the Raipur and Drug Districts. The value of all the Provincial buildings on the Public Works Department books in 1908 was Rs. 6,35,686, and only Rs. 5329 is spent annually in repairs. Of the bungalows occupied by gazetted officers, two are Government buildings and intended for the use of the Deputy Commissioner and the District Superintendent of Police. Of the present Government buildings the jail (1873) and District court (1874) are the oldest according to the records and local tradition. It is said that both were built on the sites of temporary structures. They have both been added to considerably since. The jail has cost Rs. 99,381, and the District court Rs. 1,03,673. A new civil court—a commodious building—was completed in 1908 at a cost of Rs. 64,314. There is a small meteorological observatory building at the Pendrā Road railway station. Otherwise, the Government buildings of the District are such as are usually found in *mofussil* Districts. The only Imperial Public Works Department building is the Bilāspur Post Office, built at a cost of Rs. 12,994. The principal buildings, other than Government property, are the English Church, American Mission Church, Town Hall, Main Dispensary, American Mission Hospital, High School, and Railway Institute. These are all in Bilāspur.

In the District there are 222 miles of metalled or surfaced roads maintained by the Public Works Department and 30 miles maintained by the District Council. But in the whole District there are only some 4 miles of 1st class road, and in the rains the roads of the District are not easily passable by carts. Means of communication are still somewhat poor; but they have been very greatly increased in the past 10 or 12 years as a result of the relief works opened in the

famines. Before 1897 there was scarcely a surfaced road in the District. Recently several commodious inspection bungalows have been built along the roads. The Public Works Department spend Rs. 34,425 yearly on the maintenance of their roads.

Irrigation.

201. The present District forms an Irrigation subdivision which was opened in 1906. The staff consists of a Supervisor as Subdivisional Officer and 5 sub-overseers. The works completed up to 1909 are two minor tanks at Hardi (Rs. 17,782) and Dhānras (Rs. 41,096) and two grant-in-aid works (Loharsi and Chauhā). Two grant-in-aid tanks now in Raipur are also under the Subdivisional Officer's charge. There has been no charge for maintenance yet. One minor tank (Barpāli) is under construction (estimated cost Rs. 36,080). Several projects have been investigated and surveyed, but most of them have been rejected. River gauging in connection with some of the river projects is being carried out.

Police.

202. The strength of the police in the District is 508 officers and men and consists of— 1 District Superintendent, 1 Deputy Superintendent, 5 Inspectors, 13 Sub-Inspectors, 76 head constables, 409 constables, and 3 sowārs. Excluding the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent and the police engaged in guards, reserve, training and various duties at headquarters, 334 of all ranks are engaged actually in prevention and detection of crime, that is, one policeman for every 23 square miles of area and every 2746 people, a very small proportion. They are distributed amongst 11 Station-houses with 27 subordinate outposts. The annual cost of the District police is Rs. 80,136. The force is recruited almost entirely from outside the District, and consists mostly of up-country men. The District contains in addition a body of railway police under an Inspector at Bilāspur station. The latter has under him two Sub-Inspectors, of whom one at Bilāspur is in charge of the length of line from

Raipur to Jamgā, and the other at Umaria looks after the Katni branch line, 5 head constables and 38 constables who work within the area of jurisdiction of the District Magistrate of Bilāspur, and two constables at Bhātapāra who are within the jurisdiction of Raipur.

Prior to 1st of May 1888 all zamīndārs were responsible for the maintenance and administration of the police within their estates. But from that date the zamīndārs of Pandaria, Kanteli, and Chāmpa were relieved of the responsibility, as were the other zamīndārs from the 1st September 1892. Part of the cost of police within their estates was added to their land-revenue payment to Government.

Kotwārs.

203. Very little change has been made in the system of kotwārs since the District came under British rule. At the first settlement those with hereditary rights (if any) in the *khālsa* were recorded and very few changes were made at the second settlement (1890). A change in the rate of remuneration was however made. At the first settlement the payments varied from 5 to 10 *kāthas dhān* per plough. At the second settlement the rate was fixed at 1 *kātha dhān* or ½ *kātha* wheat per rupee of rental, the mālguzār having to pay on the rental value of land in his own occupation, but deducting the rental value of any service holding held by the kotwār. With the great increase in the value of land mālguzārs show a disinclination to grant service holdings to kotwārs and at the same time they make frequent default in payment of their dues to the kotwārs. The kotwārs enjoy several perquisites, some officially recognised, others not, such as remuneration for weighing grain sold in the village, headloads of grain at threshing time and when the seed bins are opened, collections at bazars, and presents at marriages. Hides of cattle are not taken by the kotwārs as is the custom in many Districts. The kotwār is nearly always a Gānda or Pankā by caste. He is seldom called kotwār, usually *tahlu*,

or less frequently *gurhait*, *chaukidār*, *or raptā* (the man who makes reports). There are 1706 kotwārs in the *khālsa* for 1864 inhabited villages. Fifty-three villages have more than one kotwār.

In the zamīndārīs the kotwārs are appointed on the zamīndār's nomination. Their dues have not been fixed authoritatively by Government, and differ in various estates. In the western zamīndāris Pandaria and Kanteli and in Chāmpa, that is the zamīndāris which are mostly open like the *khālsa*, the remuneration is similarly on the rental. In the northern zamīndāris the remuneration is usually 5 *kāthas dhān* per plough and the tenants cultivate the kotwār's holding for him. Another distinctive perquisite is R. 1 yearly for a blanket.

As the zamīndāris have been opened out considerably of recent years, the distribution of villages to kotwārs has become very unequal and will need considerable revision at the settlement now proceeding. There are now 988 kotwārs in the zamīndāris for 1381 inhabited villages. Nine villages in zamīndāris have more than one kotwār.

Jail.

204. The Superintendent of the Jail is the Civil Surgeon, an officer of the Indian Medical Service. The staff consists of 1 Jailor, 1 Assistant Jailor, 3 head warders, 18 warders and a Hospital Assistant, who is also in charge of the police hospital. The jail is a 4th class District jail and has accommodation for 164 prisoners (including 21 in hospital, 5 in cells, 18 females, 28 under-trials and 3 civil prisoners). Since 1900 the average daily number of prisoners has been—*1901*, 196, *1902*, 178, *1903*, 140, *1904*, 116, *1905*, 115, *1906*, 108 and *1907*, 92. The average daily number of female prisoners during the same period has been 10, and of literate prisoners 20. In 1908 the average daily number of prisoners was 104, of whom 11 were females and 20 literate. In the same period the average yearly cost of each prisoner's diet has been Rs. 25-8-10 and the average total charges per head have been Rs. 75-13-9. Each prisoner has earned in cash yearly an average of Rs. 7-4-4.

The total cost to Government of each prisoner therefore has been Rs. 68-9-5 yearly. At present the industries are aloe-pounding, wheat grinding, wire netting and stone breaking. Since 1900 there have been yearly two to three deaths in the jail, and eight prisoners have escaped of whom five were recaptured. Habitual criminals sentenced to more than six months and casuals sentenced to more than one year are sent to the Raipur Central Jail to serve their sentences. Criminals sentenced to death are also sent to Raipur Central Jail for execution.

Education.

205. At the 1901 census 17,754 males and 502 females were literate or 3·6 per cent. of the male population and 0·1 of the female population. The District was the least literate in the Province, with one exception, in proportion to the population. There has been considerable progress since. In 1900-01 there were 8594 pupils and in 1903-04 12,351 under instruction. In 1908-09 there were 18,140 pupils under instruction, and this in a District reduced in area and population since 1906. In 1900-01 there were 148 schools, and in 1908-09 198. Of these 185 are boys' schools and 13 girls' schools. The boys' schools comprise one Municipal High School (raised from middle school in 1904), one aided English middle school (for the railway native staff), 10 District Council vernacular middle schools, one aided vernacular middle school (maintained at Bilāspur by the Mission), 3 Municipal primary schools, 129 District Council schools, 15 aided (of which 7 are maintained by Missions) and 25 unaided schools (of which 6 are maintained by Missions, one by the zamīndār of Korbā, one by the Muhammadans of Bilāspur town and 17 by village subscriptions).

The girls' schools comprise one aided vernacular middle school (maintained by the Mission in Bilāspur town) and 7 Government primary schools, 4 aided (3 under Missions and one maintained by the zamīndār, Pandaria) and one unaided school (maintained by the Mission).

The number of pupils at the High School is 259, at the boys' middle schools 1936 and at the boys' primary schools 14,957 (of whom 1025 are girls). At the girls' middle school 203 pupils attend and 785 at the primary schools. The total number of boy pupils is therefore 16,128 and of girls 2012, the total number of children going to school being 18,140. Of boys of school-going age 21·9 per cent. and of girls 2·8 per cent. attend school. There are teachers' training classes attached to eight boys' and one girls' vernacular middle school. The average daily attendance in 1908-09 was 72 per cent. of all pupils enrolled. In the *khālsa*, or open parts of the District, excluding Bilāspur town, there is one school for every 12 villages on an average. The zamīndāris are very backward and only contain 30 schools for 1460 villages. The total expenditure for 1908-09 was Rs. 93,160 and has nearly trebled in the last ten years. Of the expenditure, Rs. 39,877 were from Provincial funds (including grants to Local Bodies for education), Rs. 27,773 were from District Council funds, Rs. 7607 from Municipal funds, Rs. 8218 from fees, and Rs. 9685 from private sources. The High School is recognised by the Allahābād University.

The Inspector of Schools of the Chhattīsgarh Circle with headquarters at Raipur is the local departmental officer. He has two deputies for the District, one for the western portion and the other for the eastern portion.

In the last few years very great progress has been made in constructing new school buildings, raising masters' pay and opening new schools. The people as a whole cannot be said to be very anxious for education and official pressure has frequently to be brought to bear on parents. The Chamārs who form so large a proportion of the population are least anxious for it; and other castes are not keen on the attendance of Chamār boys at the public schools, so that local opposition has not infrequently to be broken down. Schoolmasters generally have other duties to perform, which bring them in additions to their pay and sometimes interfere with their

teaching duties. Such additional duties are cattle registration on bazar days, the charge of cattle pounds, post offices and the vend of stamps and quinine. There is one European school in the District which was opened in 1892 by the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway Company for children of its employés and is attended by both boys and girls, the number on the rolls in 1909 being 36. The staff consists of a head mistress and an assistant mistress and it is inspected by the Inspector of European Schools, Bombay and Central Provinces. The expenditure in 1908-09 was Rs. 2134, which was met by a Provincial grant of Rs. 643, a railway donation of Rs. 600 and receipts from fees amounting to Rs. 891.

Medical.

206. There are ten hospitals and dispensaries in the District. These include a police hospital at headquarters, the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway hospital at Bilāspur under an Assistant Surgeon and European Doctor and two Mission hospitals at Bilāspur and Mungelī. That at Bilāspur is for women and children and has 32 beds; that at Mungelī is a general hospital with 12 beds for men and 12 for women, and in connection with it a branch dispensary is opened on bazar days at Bareli 9 miles away. Two hospitals were built by the Court of Wards in the Pendrā and Pandaria zamīndāris when those estates were under management and are now maintained by the zamīndārs, Government supplying each with the services of a Hospital Assistant. The Pendrā hospital has 2 beds for women and 2 for men, while that at Pandaria has 4 beds for men and 4 for women. There are four public hospitals and dispensaries maintained by contributions from Government, from local funds and private subscriptions. They are—(1) the main dispensary at Bilāspur under an Assistant Surgeon with 16 beds for men and 12 for women; a midwife is also attached here; (2) branch dispensaries at Mungelī with 3 beds for men and 3 for women, Jānjgir with 2 beds for men and 2 for women and Chandarpur, each under a Hospital Assistant. There are no beds for in-patients at

Chandarpur. In 1908 the Mungelī Mission hospital with its branch bazar dispensary treated 285 in-patients and 13,578 out-patients. The Bilāspur Mission hospital treated 318 in-patients and 4210 out-patients. At the public main dispensary at Bilāspur the average daily indoor attendance in 1908 was 20 and of outdoor patients 89. At the other five public and private aided (zamīndāri) dispensaries the daily average of indoor patients was between 2 and 3 and of outdoor patients 31.

The income of the four public dispensaries in 1908 was from—

	Rs.
Government	4,921
Local Funds	7,986
Subscriptions	665
Other sources	287
Total ...	13,859

Their expenditure was Rs. 10,568, and there is a fair balance in each Dispensary Fund. To the two zamīndāri dispensaries Government contributed Rs. 811, the rest of the expenditure Rs. 2107 being defrayed by the zamīndārs. Only one dispensary (Jānjgir) has invested funds (Rs. 2500) Post-mortem examinations for police cases are held at Bilāspur, Mungelī, Pendrā, Jānjgir and Chandarpur, all of which places possess mortuaries except Chandarpur, where one is to be built. There is a mortuary at Pandaria, but post mortem examinations are not held there. There are two leper asylums in the District supported mainly by Missions. That at Mungelī is under the management of the American Foreign Christian Mission and is reserved for males and married couples; a branch for females has recently been built at Pendrīdih—a village 9 miles from Mungelī belonging to the Mission. Funds are provided by the Mission to Lepers in the East. But since 1st May 1903 Government has given a monthly donation of R. 1-8-0 per adult and

twelve annas per child for every resident leper from British territory. There are at present (1909) 53 men and 48 women in the asylum.

The other asylum is at Chāmpa and is managed and mainly supported by the American Mennonite Conference. Since 1st April 1908 the Government has given the donation already mentioned. There are at present (1909) 103 lepers, but of these only 26 men, 25 women, and 2 children resident in the asylum get the monthly donation, as the grant was limited to the number in the asylum at the time of sanction.

Quinine is sold in 1 pice packets containing 7 grains at all post offices, and at 18 other places by schoolmasters and licensed stamp vendors under Government supervision.

Vaccination.

207. Vaccination is compulsory in the municipal area of Bilāspur. Elsewhere there is no legal compulsion, but a very considerable proportion of the children under one year of age are successfully vaccinated. It is claimed that over 99 per cent. of primary vaccinations in the years 1906-07, 1907-08, and 1908-09 were successful, the number of primary vaccinations done by vaccinators being 39,499 in 1906-07, 39,184 in 1907-08 and 33,423 in 1908-09, the rate being 43, 44 and 38 respectively per thousand of the population of the present District according to the last census. Of the children born in the year, 81 per cent. in 1906-07, 87 per cent. in 1907-08 and 82 per cent. in 1908-09 were successfully vaccinated.

There is no general objection to primary vaccination, but re-vaccination is not much in favour. In 1908-09 though small-pox was very bad only 1361 persons were vaccinated. There is one vaccinator for the town of Bilāspur, and for the rest of the District the work is done by 2 assistant superintendents, 21 vaccinators and 2 apprentices. It is proposed to appoint shortly two more assistant superintendents. The vaccinators work usually during the cold weather from October to March, and until 1908 used to

come into Bilāspur for six months. They now reside in their circles the whole year. The total cost of vaccination in 1908-09 was Rs. 4998 all of which, except Rs. 198 travelling allowance, was defrayed by the Local Bodies. The average cost of each successful case in 1908-09 was R. 0-2-3. The control of the vaccination staff now rests with the Local Bodies, who still however find it best to work through the Civil Surgeon. The District is always notorious for the prevalence of small-pox; the annual mortality from this cause varying between 1902 and 1907 from 0·44 to 0·91 per thousand of the population. In 1908 it rose to 2·59.

Veterinary dispensary.

208. A veterinary dispensary at Bilāspur was opened in June 1898. From 1898 to 1905 the dispensary was located in a rented house. New buildings at a cost of Rs. 2300 were constructed in 1905, the Government giving a contribution. Additions and alterations to the Bilāspur buildings are being made in 1909 at a cost of Rs. 4480. A second veterinary assistant for Bilāspur for touring in the villages was appointed in 1903 and one for Mungelī in 1908. It is proposed to appoint a veterinary assistant for Jānjgir and the District Council is ready to maintain a dispensary there also so soon as a man can be sent. All the veterinary assistants are to be paid from Provincial Funds from 1st March 1909, but in 1908-09 the cost of maintenance to the District Council was Rs. 2404. The Municipal Committee of Bilāspur contributes Rs. 500 yearly to the cost. During the year 1908-09, 4843 patients were treated at the Bilāspur and Mungelī dispensaries and 74 reports of cattle disease from villages in the District were attended to. Six hundred and two animals were inoculated for rinderpest. Most of this work was done from the Bilāspur dispensary, the Mungelī dispensary having been opened late in the year.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, ZAMINDARIS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

GATEWAY OF OLD TEMPLE ADBHAR, CHANDARPUR.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, ZAMINDARIS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS, AND HILLS.

Adbhar.—A village in the Chandarpur estate about 40 miles from Bilāspur with a population of 1300 persons. It contains an old temple of Devī of which two ornamental doorways remain. One of these, the gateway of the enclosure, is very severe in outline and very much like some of the later cave doorways such as are found at Ajanta. The other is the entrance of the shrine and has sculptured jambs like those at Rājim and Sirpur. On the corner of either jamb is a Nāga figure, whose tails run up the sides and along the lintel. Here they meet a little central figure which is perhaps that of Garuda. On the site of this temple is a hut containing an image of Mahishāsura Mardinī, who is now worshipped as Kāli. The hut also contains a Jain seated figure. The village has a number of old tanks and the traces of old forts with moats round them. It contains a primary school. The proprietor is a Chhattīsgarhī Brāhman who has four other villages.

Agar River.—A river which rises in the Maikal range in the north of Pandaria zamīndāri and flows south and east through that zamīndāri and Mungelī tahsīl until it joins the Maniāri near Kukusdā. The town of Mungelī is situated on the Agar.

Akaltara.—A village in the Jānjgīr tahsīl and the second railway station from Bilāspur towards Jānjgir. Its area is nearly 5000 acres and the population was 2100 persons in 1901 as against 1800 in 1891. Mr. Hira Lāl thinks that the name may be derived from Akāldeva, the younger brother of Prithvīdeva II of the Haihaya dynasty of Ratanpur. His name is mentioned in an inscription which

is now in the bungalow of Mr. Considine in Bilāspur. There are a number of temples here built in a modern patchwork style with bricks and other materials, probably taken from older buildings on the same site. Two temples still stand and an erection which is known as the Mahal or palace, but is of very modest dimensions. Two important inscriptions were discovered here, both of which had been brought from Kotgarh. One of them is fixed in the wall of a temple of Siva built by the mālguzār about 30 years ago. It refers to the Kalachuri kings of Ratanpur and to a chief named Vallabharāja, a subordinate of theirs, who is recorded to have built a temple of Revanta and made a lake in the vicinity of the palace and stables, in the year 893 of the Kalachuri era or 1141 A.D. It is probable that this temple was constructed in Kotgarh where the inscription was found. The other inscription has been removed to the Raipur Museum. About 8 miles from Akaltarā is a hill known as the Dalhā Pahār which, rising solitary from the plain, forms a conspicuous feature in the landscape for a long distance. The name Dal is said to be a term used for an elephant. Akaltarā has a considerable amount of trade and markets are held on Mondays and Fridays. It has a fine tank and a large area of sugarcane cultivation. The village is the headquarters of a Revenue Inspector and contains a primary school and a post office. The proprietors are two Daraihā Rājputs.

Arpa River.—A stream which rises beyond the range north of Kendā in the Bilāspur District, and after a picturesque course through the hills, enters the plain of the Bilāspur tahsīl, through which it flows for about 40 miles skirting the town of Bilāspur until it joins the Seonāth near the village of Bartori. It is crossed by the railway near Karrā in the Bilāspur tahsīl. Sugarcane and vegetables are grown in many villages in the fertile *kachhār* soil along the banks of the Arpā.

Baloda.—A large village in the Jānjgir tahsīl 10 miles north of Akaltarā station and about 20 miles from Bilāspur.

Its area is 3500 acres, and the population was 2600 persons in 1901 as against 2800 in 1891. The village has some trade in lac, salt and thread, and brass ornaments are made here. It contains a primary school and a post office, and a number of tanks. The proprietor is a Sonār.

Bamhnidih (The place of Brāhmans)—A large village in the Chāmpa zamīndāri of the Jānjgir tahsīl, situated on the eastern bank of the Hasdo river, 12 miles south of Chāmpa, with which it is connected by a metalled road. Its area is 2000 acrės and the population was more than 2700 persons in 1901, having increased by a thousand during the preceding decade. The largest cattle-market of the District is held here on Fridays and Saturdays, and animals are brought for sale from Rewah and the northern Districts of the Central Provinces. Sales are registered and a small fee is charged. Grain, timber, bamboos and lac are also sold at the market. The village has a primary school and a branch post office.

Belpan.—A village in the Jānjgir tahsīl, about 20 miles from Bilāspur, with a population of 200 persons in 1901 as against more than 400 in 1891. The small stream of the Nerbudda has its source in a spring here. It is supposed that the Nerbudda river flowed underground from Amarkantak at the request of a holy man and came out at this place. In order to test the fact the sage threw a leaf of the *bel* tree with his name written upon it into the Nerbudda at Amarkantak and found it again in this spring, hence the place was called Belpān or 'The Leaf of the *Bel* Tree.' An annual fair is held here on the last day of Māgh (January-February), lasting for three days. Traders come from Bilāspur and Mandlā and vessels of bell-metal and lac toys are sold. The attendance is about 10,000 persons. The village has a temple of Mahādeo and some fine tanks. The proprietor is a Kāyasth.

Bilaspur Tahsil.—The central and headquarters tahsīl of the District lying between 21° 43′ and 23° 7′ N. and

81° 44′ and 82° 40′ E. The former area of the tahsīl was 5080 square miles, or as large as an average District of the Central Provinces, but in 1906 on the formation of the new Drug District it was considerably reduced in size. The Tarengā estate lying south of the Seonāth river with an area of 226 square miles was transferred to the Balodā Bazār tahsīl of Raipur, and the three zamīndāris of Korbā, Chhuri and Uprorā with an area of 1643 square miles to the Jānjgir tahsīl. At the same time for better adjustment of boundaries a small area of 21 square miles lying to the west of the Maniāri river was transferred from Bilāspur to Mungelī, and 79 square miles comprised in the Balodā tract from Bilāspur to Jānjgir. The area of the reconstituted tahsīl is 3111 square miles or 41 per cent. of that of the District, and it is the largest of the three tahsīls. It is bounded on the north by the Rewah and Korea States, on the west by the Mungelī tahsīl, on the east by the Jānjgir tahsīl and on the south by the Raipur District. It contains 96 square miles of Government forest. It also includes the zamīndāri estates of Pendrā, Kendā, Lāpha, and Mātin with an area of 1976 square miles. The tahsīl consists of an open plain, mainly producing rice, to the south, and an expanse of hill and forest comprised in the zamīndāri estates to the north. In the latter tract some of the wildest country in Chhattīsgarh may be found. A small *khālsa* tract consisting of hills and jungle also lies round Ratanpur and Bitkulī in the north. The principal streams which intersect the Bilāspur tahsīl are the Nerbudda, Ghongā, Arpā, Khārun and the Līlāgar, which fall into the Seonāth. The Līlāgar forms the natural boundary between the two tahsīls of Bilāspur and Jānjgir. The Maniāri in the west forms the natural boundary between the Mungelī and Bilāspur tahsīls and the Seonāth in the south-east forms the natural boundary between Raipur and Bilāspur. The Son rises on the Pendrā plateau and flows towards Northern India; and 2 miles over the border at Amarkantak, now in Rewah State but formerly in Pendrā, rises the Nerbudda.

Population.

The population of the reconstituted tahsīl in 1901 was 321,915 persons or 35 per cent. of that of the District. In 1891 the population was 345,332 persons, and during the decade the population decreased by about 7 per cent. which was less than that of either of the other two tahsīls. Bilāspur is sparsely populated with 103 persons per square mile as against 122 in Mungelī and 138 in Jānjgir tahsīl. The tahsīl contains two towns, Bilāspur and Ratanpur, and 1049 inhabited and 49 uninhabited villages. Besides the two towns five villages, Ghutkū (2024), Ganiāri (2353), Mallār (2010), Takhatpur (2616) and Pendrā (2457) contained between 2000 and 5000 persons, and the following 17 villages contained over 1000 persons in 1901 :—Birkonā (1836), Gataura (1922), Hardikalān (1299), Lohārsi (1677), Mopkā (1132), Neosā (1152), Neorā (1139), Nargorā (1016), Okhar (1018), Paonsarā (1351), Rānigaon (1517), Sipat (1783), Bacharwār (1067), Gaurelā (1704), Amali (1052), Kotā (1367) and Pondi (1090).

Agriculture.

The description of soils given in the chapter on Agriculture applies without variation to the ahsīl. Of the total area of the tahsīl in 1906-07, 96 square miles or 3 per cent were covered by Government forests, another area of 658 square miles was covered by zamīndāri forests, and of the mālguzāri area 286 square miles consist of forest, scrub jungle and grass. Of the village area of 997 square miles a proportion of 66 per cent. was occupied for cultivation in 1907-08, while the proportion of occupied area in the zamīndāris was 22 per cent. The cultivated area in 1907-08 was 581,278 acres and the net cropped area 469,787 acres. Rice covered 329,167 acres or 63 per cent., linseed 16,887 acres or 3 per cent., urad, mūng and moth 20.942 acres or 5 per cent., wheat 18,797 acres or 3 per cent, kodon-kutkī 82,387 acres or 16 per cent., tiurā 19,838 acres or 3 per cent., til 16,745 acres or 3 per cent. and gram 4702 acres or 1 per cent. The double-cropped area was 49,214 acres. The irrigated area rose

from 5803 acres in 1906-07 to 49,807 acres in 1907-08. The statistics of cropping during the three years 1905-06 to 1907-08 are shown on the next page.

Land Revenue.

The land revenue of the mālguzāri area was Rs. 1,31,132 in 1907-08 and cesses were Rs. 7729. The land revenue fell at R. 0-4-2 per cultivated acre. The demand for *takolī* in the zamīndāris was Rs. 11,220 and for cesses Rs. 860. A fresh settlement is now being made.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsīl is divided into six Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Kandar, Bīja, Nargorā, Mastūri, Pendrā, and Kendā and 131 patwāris' circles. It has four police Station-houses at Bilāspur, Ratanpur, Pendrā, and Kotā, and 11 outposts, *viz.*, Bilāspur town, Hirri, Ganiāri, Mastūri, Nargorā, Lāpha, Kendā, Marwāhi, Mātin, Takhatpur, and Kargi. Of these, Mātin outpost is subordinate to Korbā Station-house in Jānjgir tahsīl, Takhatpur and Kargi outposts to Station-houses in Mungelī tahsīl.

Position and population.

Bilaspur Town.—The headquarters town of the District, situated in 22° 5′ N. and 82° 10′ E. on the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway, 776 miles from Bombay and 445 miles from Calcutta by rail. A branch line of 198 miles leads from Bilāspur to Katnī junction on the East Indian Railway. The town stands on the western bank of the river Arpā, three miles from the railway station. The population was 18,937 persons in 1901 as against 11,1.2 in 1891. Bilāspur is rapidly increasing in importance and the population has almost quadrupled since 1872. In 1901 the population included 2364 Muhammadans and 543 Christians.

Historical.

The town is said to have been founded about 350 years ago by a fisherwoman named Bilāsa, from whom it takes its name. For a long period it consisted only of a few fishermen's huts, but about 1770 A.D. a Marāthā officer of the District

Statistics of cropping.

Year.		Rice.	Wheat.	Kodon-kutkī.	Linseed.	Gram.	Cotton.	Til.	Tiurā-lākh.	Masūr.	Urad, mūng and moth.	Peas.	Sugarcane.	Double-cropped area.	Total cropped area (a).	Irrigated area.
1905-06	Khālsa ...	230,805	27,964	32,751	33,301	7921	72	7636	21,461	6418	19,172	7108	812	58,871	407,737	15,551
	Zamīndāris ...	78,668	1029	9883	1225	3641	386	4941	326	37	11,202	170	54	4572	129,030	636
	Total ...	309,473	28,993	42,634	34,526	11,562	458	12,577	21,787	6455	30,374	7278	866	63,443	536,767	16,187
1906-07	Khālsa ...	229,849	26,419	17,455	56,403	6184	101	9196	29,603	7833	25,757	6857	515	87,753	456,651	5675
	Zamīndāris ...	82,004	905	13,740	1327	3216	378	6178	293	33	12,240	140	56	4903	138,825	128
	Total ...	311,853	27,324	31,195	57,730	9400	479	15,374	29,936	7866	37,997	6997	571	92,656	595,476	5803
1907-08	Khālsa ...	241,427	18,598	46,870	16,431	3960	83	10,676	19,662	4928	18,060	3391	754	47,297	381,462	48,216
	Zamīndāris ...	87,740	199	35,517	456	742	354	6,069	176	12	11,882	62	64	1917	137,539	1591
	Total ...	329,167	18,797	82,387	16,887	4702	437	16,745	19,838	4940	29,942	3453	818	49,214	519,001	49,807
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1907-08		63	3	16	3	1	0·08	3	3	1	5	1	0·16	...	...	...

(a) Includes double-cropped area.

took up his residence here and began to build a fort. This was never completed but a portion of it still exists on the bank of the river. The Marāthās up to 1818 A.D. always maintained their headquarters at Ratanpur, and hence Bilāspur remained in comparative insignificance. It was chosen as the headquarters of the new Bilāspur District in 1862 and since then has made steady progress in wealth and population. Bilāspur has no antiquarian remains of its own, but some statues and inscriptions have been brought from Ratanpur, Mallār, and Jānjgir and are in the bungalows of private gentlemen.

Municipal undertakings and trade.

Bilāspur was constituted a municipality in 1867 and has a committee of twelve members. The average municipal receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 33,000, and the expenditure was practically the same. In 1906 the receipts amounted to Rs. 39,000, of which Rs. 23,000 were derived from octroi. The total municipal area is 2771 acres, of which 653 are Government land and 139 have been acquired by the railway. The town contains portions of the mālguzāri villages of Bilāspur, Chānta and Khudurdānd. It is divided into three wards, Chātapāra, Gol Bazār and Old Bilāspur, and extends for about two miles along the southern bank of the river, the railway line being to the east and the civil station to the west. The principal market is the Gol Bazār and the new town, known as Chātapāra, lies to the west of this. Bilāspur has a large import trade but in respect of exports it ranks after Akaltarā and Bhātapāra. Its trade is principally with Bombay. The chief local industries are the weaving of tasar silk and cotton cloth; and brass ornaments are also made. Bilāspur is the headquarters of the Central Provinces Agency for recruiting labour for the Assam Tea Gardens. The European community comprises, in addition to the officers usually found at a District headquarters station, a number of railway servants, and Bilāspur is the headquarters of a company of volunteers. A large weekly market is held on Saturdays, and

there is also a cattle-market, the animals brought for sale being collected on a piece of grass land in the centre of the town adjoining the river.

Public institutions.

The educational institutions comprise a High School, which obtained this status in 1905 and is affiliated to the Allahābād University. About 50 pupils are enrolled in the High School class and 268 in the middle school class. There are also three branch schools, an Anglo-vernacular middle school and a girls' school, while the American Evangelical Mission supports a vernacular middle school for boys and two schools for girls. The railway community have an English middle school and one for European children. The medical institutions comprise a municipal dispensary and two others belonging to the police and the American Mission, 26 beds being available for indoor patients. The District Council maintains a veterinary dispensary with two assistants. A station of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society of America was opened here in 1885. A church has been built, and the Mission also supports an orphanage for girls, schools for boys and girls, and a dispensary. Another church was built on railway land in 1907. The town has three post offices. A Town Hall was built in 1896 at a cost of about Rs. 12,000 by the District Council and Municipality.

Bisesara.—A small village in the Pendrā zamīndāri situated about 9 miles from Pendrā on the Son river, with a population of 200 persons. The name is a corruption of Vishweswara or 'The Lord of the Universe,' a Hindu Saint. The village contains the remains of a Sivite monastery and some temples and statues. These figures appear to be as old as those of Dhanpur, which Mr. Beglar assigns to the period of about the ninth century A. D. The old site of the village has been abandoned for fear of the goddess Mahāmai who is enshrined here. The people believe that the goddess is bad-tempered and devours those who live near her shrine.

Champa Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Champa Village.—The headquarters of the Chāmpa zamīndāri of the Jānjgir tahsīl, and the next railway station to Nailā towards Calcutta, situated on the eastern bank of the Hasdo river. Its area is 4000 acres and the population was 4300 persons in 1901 as against 3900 in 1891. The village has a considerable trade in grain, tasar silk, and lac; and weekly markets are held on Mondays and Thursdays. A station of the American Mennonite Mission has been opened here and supports a leper asylum. The village has a vernacular middle school and a girls' school and an inspection hut.

Chhuri Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Chhuri Village.—The headquarters of the Chhuri zamīndāri of the Jānjgir tahsīl, situated about 50 miles from Bilāspur *viâ* Ratanpur, Pāli and Chaitma. It had a population of more than 2100 persons in 1901 as against 1700 in 1891. About 6 miles from the village is an eminence of 2000 feet known as the hill of Kosgain Devī. On the top of this is a fort surrounded by a stone wall and within is a small watch house. It is said that this was once the residence of Dāma Dhurwa Gond, a notorious robber. He was killed by a gatekeeper of Ratanpur fort, who obtained as his reward a grant of the present Chhuri zamīndāri and founded the family. This place was also the site of a battle between Bāharsai, Haihaya king of Ratanpur, and the Pathāns in the sixteenth century. The king left a record of his victory on a stone which is now kept in the Nāgpur Museum. In the fort are some sculptures of considerable beauty representing the five Pāndava brothers. There is a little shrine of the Kosgain Devī; Kosgain is supposed to have been a virgin who was turned into stone. A small fair is held here on the day of Dasahra, at which the zamīndār slaughters a buffalo. Some hundred or more goats are also sacrificed and their blood is poured into a small stone cistern in front of Devi's shrine, which is said never to get full. Wild plantains grow on the hill. Chhuri has

a police Station-house, a branch post office and a primary school.

Dhanpur.—A village in the Pendrā zamīndāri about five miles north of Pendrā with a population of about 300 persons in 1901. Dhanpur was formerly an important place and the ruins and débris of old buildings are found over nearly four square miles of ground; but the great mass of them are compressed within an area of nearly half a square mile There is a local story to the effect that Dhanpur and Ratanpur were built simultaneously by the Haihaya Rājputs and they decided to choose as their capital the place in which a lamp should become alight of its own accord. The miracle happened in Ratanpur, which was accordingly selected as the capital. The principal feature of the place is the great tank known as Bhauntarā, near which are several fragments of sculpture. Half a mile to the north of the tank are several low mounds covered by the remains of buildings and surrounded by scrub forest. The first group consists of six temples; and half a mile to the west of this is another block of four ruined temples with several smaller detached or isolated shrines close by. To the north of these is a long chain of tanks, and on the low rugged hillocks on the opposite bank of the tank is a mound of ruins, consisting of a group of four large temples apparently Jain. Not far from these is another tank known as Sobhanātha, on the bank of which are collected numerous Jain fragments of statuary. Some of the temples are built of stone and others of brick and stone, the bricks being of the same very large and old kind as are found at Sirpur. Another curious relic is a huge figure of a Jain naked god carved out of a large cylindrical rock. This is known as Benibai or Kapupāt and the people believe that treasure is buried under it. One of the chain of tanks referred to above is called Bhauntarā and it is said that formerly it washed up cooking vessels for travellers, with which they could cook their evening meal. But a covetous Brāhman once tried to

make off with the vessels and the water of the tank ran after him for two miles and snatched back the vessels, and since then the miracle has ceased to happen. A drain which leads from the tank is pointed out as the track by which the water ran after the Brāhman. Another tank is known as Bamanmarā, and it is said that some Brāhman traders were travelling through Pendrā carrying a quantity of fine Dacca muslin secreted in bamboo tubes. The zamīndār hearing of this sent men to seize the muslin when the Brāhmans leapt into the tank to escape from them, and were drowned. Dhanpur was apparently the capital of the Komo chiefs.

Ganiari.—A large village in the Bilāspur tahsīl, 12 miles north of Bilāspur. Its area is nearly 1900 acres and the population was 2350 persons in 1901 as against 2050 in 1891. The village has about fifteen tanks and ponds from which a considerable area can be irrigated, and a large weekly cattle market is held here on Thursdays and Fridays. Ganiāri is held free of revenue in perpetuity by an old priestly family, now represented by Janārdan Shāstri and his three cousins. The family are prosperous and have several other villages. The village has a vernacular middle school, a girls' school and a branch post office.

Gatora.—A large village in the Bilāspur tahsīl about 6 miles east of Bilāspur. Its area is 4500 acres and the population was just over 1900 persons both in 1901 and 1891. A number of statues are found here carefully executed and finished in black stone. The village has several tanks from which a considerable area can be irrigated. It contains a primary school. The proprietors are a Chattīsgarhī Brāhman family.

Ghutku.—A large and flourishing village in the Bilāspur tahsīl, and the first railway station from Bilāspur on the Katnī line. Its area is 3700 acres and the population was 2000 persons in 1901 as against 1800 in 1891. The Arpā river forms its eastern boundary. The village has a number of tanks from which a considerable area can be irrigated and



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DOORWAY OF TEMPLE OF VISHNU, JANJGIR.

much sugarcane is grown. There are also some fine mango groves. It has a primary school and a weekly market is held on Sundays. The proprietor is a Baniā, a relative of the Tarengā tāhutdāri family.

Hanp River.—This stream rises in the hills of the Pandaria zamīndāri near the border of the Mandlā District and forms for some distance the boundary between the Pandaria zamīndāri and the Kawardhā State. It passes Pandaria and then divides that zamīndāri from the Mungelī tahsīl. After traversing the Mungelī tahsīl to the south the Hānp enters the Bemetarā tahsīl of Drug District and joins the Seonāth near Tarpongi about three miles west of Nāndghāt. The Sakri meets the Hānp near Rismali. The total length of the river is about 80 miles.

Hasdo River.—A stream which rises in Surgujā territory and after a picturesque career through the rocky gorges of Mātin and Uprorā zamīndāris emerges into the plains of Korbā and Chāmpa, until it joins the Mahānadi 8 miles east of Seorīnarāyan. The villages of Korbā and Chāmpa are situated on its banks and at the latter place it is crossed by the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. The current of the Hasdo is swift and its bed is defective and full of quick sands so that in all seasons it is necessary to adhere strictly to the regular crossings.

Janjgir Tahsil.—The eastern tahsīl of the District lying between 21° 37′ and 22° 50′ N. and 82° 25′ and 83° 40′ E. In 1901 its area was 1467 square miles. In 1905 an area of 333 square miles consisting mainly of the Chandarpur, Padampur and Mālkharodā estates were transferred from the Sambalpur District to this tahsīl. On the formation of the new Drug District in 1906 the constitution of the tahsīl was considerably altered. A tract lying south of the Mahānadi and containing the Bilaigarh-Katgi and Bhatgaon zamīndāris, the Sonākhān estate and the Sarsiwā group of villages was transferred to the Balodā Bazār tahsīl of the Raipur

Description.

District, while the three northern zamīndāris of Korbā, Chhuri and Uprorā, together with 79 square miles of *khālsa* around Balodā, were transferred from the Bilāspur to this tahsīl. The revised area of the tahsīl is 3039 square miles or 40 per cent. of that of the District. The tahsīl is the first of the three tahsīls of the District in population and the second in size. It contains only 3 square miles of Government forest. It includes the zamīndāri estates of Chāmpa, Korbā, Chhuri and Uprorā with a total area of 2081 square miles of which 700 are under forest. The tahsīl is bounded on the north by the Surgujā Feudatory State, on the east by the Bengal Presidency (Sambalpur) and the Raigarh, Sakti and Udaipur States, on the south by the Raipur District, Sārangarh State, and on the west by the Bilāspur tahsil. The headquarters of the tahsīl are situated at Jānjgir, a village of 2257 inhabitants adjoining Nailā station on the railway line, 26 miles east of Bilāspur. The *khālsa* portion of the tahsīl consists almost entirely of an open plain covered with yellow clay soil and closely cropped with rice, while the northern zamīndāris lie among thickly wooded hills and plateaux, the Uprorā zamīndāri being the wildest tract in Chhattīsgarh. The only rivers and streams of any importance are the Hasdo which runs through the tahsīl from north to south, meeting the Mahānadi at Deori (it becomes very formidable during the rains and on account of its quicksands is very dangerous at all seasons); the Kanji nullah, which runs through the centre of the tahsīl; the Son which rising from the Korbā hills intersects the villages lying to the east of the Hasdo; the Borai; the Mānd which forms the boundary between the District and Udaipur State and after many miles in Native States again enters the District at the corner of Chandarpur to join the Mahānadi; the Kelo which flows through Padampur for 3 or 4 miles before joining the Mahānadi. All these streams fall into the Mahānadi which forms the southern boundary of the tahsīl. The Mahānadi and Hasdo are the only streams in whose beds much cultivation is carried on.

Population.

The population of the tahsīl in 1901 was 418,209 persons or 46 per cent. of that of the District. The population in 1891 was 451,024 and the decrease during the decade was 7·3 per cent. as against a decrease of 12·2 per cent. for the whole District. The tahsīl is more thickly populated than either of the other two tahsīls, the density being 138 persons per square mile as against 103 in the Bilāspur and 122 in the Mungelī tahsīl. The tahsīl contains 1381 villages of which 50 are uninhabited. There is no town but the following eight villages contained over 2000 persons in 1901:—Akaltarā (2139), Jānjgir (2257), Nawāgarh (2054), Salkhan (2387), Balodā (2603), Chhuri Kalān (2141), Chāmpa (4315) and Bamnidih (2746). There are also 52 villages containing between 1000 and 2000 persons.

Agriculture.

The soils of the tahsīl resemble those of the District generally as classified in the chapter on Agriculture. Of the whole area three square miles are included in Government forests, 700 square miles consist of zamīndāri forest and 256 square miles of the mālguzāri area are taken up by private forests, scrub jungle and grass. Of the mālguzāri village area of 1258 square miles, a proportion of 73 per cent. was occupied for cultivation in 1907-08 while the proportion of occupied area in the zamīndāris was only 30 per cent. In 1907-08 the cultivated area was 767,628 acres and the net cropped area 668,108 acres; rice covered an area of 566,326 acres or 80 per cent., linseed 16,631 acres or 2 per cent., urad, mūng and moth 32,108 acres or 4 per cent., wheat 5879 acres or 1 per cent., kodon-kutkī 52,691 or 7 per cent., til 16,417 acres or 2 per cent. and tiurā 9723 acres or 1 per cent. The double-cropped area was 33,319 acres. In 1906-07 an area of 3808 acres was under irrigation but the figure rose to 84,783 acres in 1907-08. The statistics of cropping during the years 1905-06, 1906-07 and 1907-08 are shown on the next page.

Statistics of cropping.

Year.		Rice.	Wheat.	Kodon-kutki.	Linseed.	Gram.	Cotton.	Til.	Tiurā-lākh.	Masūr.	Urad, mūng and moth.	Peas.	Sugarcane.	Double cropped area.	Total cropped area (*a*).	Irrigated area.
1905-06	Khālsa ...	304,326	12,615	8758	47,211	2607	2203	5737	16,276	9395	22,972	7477	945	73.556	452,887	30,165
	Zamindāris ...	241,732	1833	8541	9195	945	2441	7781	1815	1216	19,018	913	580	12,881	317,770	13,201
	Total ...	546,058	14,448	17.299	56,406	3552	4644	13,518	18,091	10,611	41,990	8390	1525	86.437	770,657	43,366
1906-07	Khālsa ...	429,730	13,841	13.729	55.795	2230	4343	13.777	14,038	10,628	32.818	7208	1669	79,888	621,283	3350
	Zamindāris ...	124,932	1913	5567	7543	541	1289	4435	946	1111	11.464	570	229	9314	175,613	458
	Total ...	554,662	14,854	19,296	63,338	2771	5632	18.212	14,984	11,739	44,282	7778	1898	89,202	796,896	3808
1907-08	Khālsa ...	441,440	5145	39,424	10,962	1041	2852	12,201	9020	3729	23.495	2453	1702	28,284	534,125	82,144
	Zamindāris ...	124,886	734	13.267	5669	507	1225	4216	703	992	8613	523	228	5035	167,302	2639
	Total ...	566,326	5879	52,691	16,631	1548	4077	16,417	9723	4721	32,108	2976	1930	33,319	701,427	84,783
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1907-08.		80	1	7·5	2	·22	·58	2	1	·67	4·5	·42	·27	4·7	...	...

(*a*) Includes double-cropped area.

Land Revenue.

In 1907-08 the demand for land revenue in the mālguzāri area was Rs. 1,35,192 and for cesses Rs. 8603. The land revenue fell at R. 0-3-4 per cultivated acre. The demand for *takolī* in the zamīndāris was Rs. 15,089 and for cesses Rs. 1686. A fresh settlement is now being made.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsīl is divided into 8 Revenue Inspectors' circles (with headquarters at Akaltarā, Dhardehi, Bāraduār, Jaijaipur, Hasod, Chhuri, Korbā and Chandarpur) and 168 patwāris' circles. It has 4 police Station-houses at Jānjgir, Seorīnarāyan, Korbā and Chandarpur with twelve outposts subordinate to them, *viz.*, Jaijaipur, Chāmpa, Balodā, Rāmgarh, Bāraduār, Dabhrā, Padampur, Rāmpur, Chhuri, Chaitmā, Uprorā (Pondi), and Mātin. Of these Mātin lies in the Bilāspur tahsīl.

Janjgir Village.—The headquarters of the tahsīl of the same name situated two miles from Nailā station. The tahsīl headquarters were formerly at Seorīnarāyan, on the Mahānadi away from the railway line. In 1885 the buildings and records there were damaged by a great flood of the river, and they were consequently removed to Jānjgir in 1891. The area of the village is 3600 acres and the population was 2250 persons in 1901 as against 1800 in 1891. The village contains two temples richly decorated with carvings. The more important of the two stands on a high basement to the east of the houses, and consists of a shrine facing the east whose exterior walls are covered with sculptures. There are two principal tiers of images round the sides, almost all of them being Vaishnava figures such as Varāha, Narsinha and Brahmā, while the corners are filled with images of Devī, of girls playing music and dancing, and of ascetics and griffins. On the back or west wall, Sūrya has the place of honour in the principal niche. Above the doorway of the shrine are carved the Hindu trinity, Brahmā, Vishnu and Siva, Vishnu being in the centre, while between them are the nine planets. The shrine is empty and as it was left

unfinished it probably never had an image, but it was certainly a Vaishnava building. It is said that the builders of this temple and the highly ornate temple of Siva at Pāli held a competition as to which should be finished first, and when the Pāli building was completed the Jānjgir temple was stopped. The smaller temple is complete and is also profusely decorated with sculptures. The derivation of the name Jānjgir is doubtful, but Mr. Hīra Lāl considers that it may be a corruption of Jājalla Nagari or the town founded by Jājalladeva, King of Ratanpur.

The village has very little trade but some tasar-silk cloth is woven. The large Bhīma tank is said to have been constructed about 800 years ago by a Rājā of the Haihaya-vansī dynasty, and to have very pure drinking water. The village contains a vernacular middle school, a post office, inspection and dāk bungalows and a dispensary. Telegrams are sent from Nailā station. A station of the American Mennonite Mission has been located in Jānjgir, and two European Missionaries live here. The proprietor is a Marāthā Brāhman who has about six other villages.

Kanteli Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Kenda Zamindari.— Do.

Kharod.—A large village situated about 2 miles from Seorīnarāyan on the Akaltarā road, and a mile from the Mahānadi river. It is divided into five *pāras* or quarters, which are now considered as separate villages. Kharod has some old temples, of which that of Lakhmeshwar is the largest and most important. It is still used and contains an old inscription dated in Chedi Samvat 933 or 1181 A.D. The inscription contains a complete list of the Haihaya kings from Kalingarāja to Ratnadeva III. It mentions the construction of a shrine of Siva at Kharod and a residence for monks, and of other temples, gardens, alms-houses, and tanks. A second inscription in Kutil characters opposite to this one was formerly plastered over, and is so mutilated that it cannot be deciphered. The characters belong to the eighth century.



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TEMPLE OF SAVARI KHAROD.

The temple to the south of the village is dedicated to Savarīdevī and is built of brick, being of the same age and practically copied from the temple of Lakshmana at Sirpur. The temples have been repaired by Government. Beyond and to the north of the village are the remains of a group of small temples, the entrances of which have been decorated with some fine sculptures. A small religious fair is held at Kharod on the festival of Shivrātri. The village has many old tanks, from which a large area can be irrigated. It has a vernacular middle school and a weekly market is held on Saturdays. The five quarters are separately owned by Brāhman families.

Korba Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Kota.—A village in the Kendā zamīndāri of the Bilāspur tahsīl, and the second railway station on the Katni branch line from Bilāspur. A match factory was opened here in 1902 by one Amrit Lāl, a railway contractor. The place was selected because the neighbouring forests afford an abundance of light wood of the *sāleh* (*Boswellia serrata*) and *semar* (*Bombax malabaricum*) trees which are suitable for the manufacture of matches. The population of Kọtā was nearly 1400 persons in 1901. It contains a primary school, a branch post office, and a police Station-house. An inspection bungalow has been erected.

Kotgarh.—An old fort situated in the village of Bargawān, about three miles north of Akaltarā on the Balodā road. The fort has two gates on the east and west, of which the western one is still standing and has fretted arches. On the eastern gate is a figure of the goddess Mahāmai and a local legend states that a human sacrifice was offered here by the owner of the fort for the prevention of cholera, but when the disease did not abate he mutilated the image of the goddess in revenge for her non-compliance with his prayers. Within the fort are the remains of some sculptured temples and several inscriptions were discovered here, but they have been removed to Akaltarā and elsewhere.

Kotmi (from *kot*, a rampart).—A large village in the Jānjgir tahsīl about 12 miles east of Bilāspur on the Līlāgar river. Its area is 3500 acres and the population was 1650 persons in 1901 as against 2100 in 1891. There is an old mud fort here surrounded by a large moat which has been turned into a tank. The village has also several other tanks, giving a considerable irrigated area and much sugarcane is grown. A cattle-market is held on Tuesdays. The village has a primary school. The proprietors are a Sonār family, relatives of the mālguzārs of Balodā.

Kudarmal.—A village in the Korbā zamīndāri of the Jānjgir tahsīl, situated on the eastern bank of the Hasdo river about 17 miles north of Chāmpa station, with a population of 700 persons. Kudarmāl contains the grave of Chūraman, son of Dharamdās, who was a disciple of Kabīr and the first Mahant of the Kabīrpanthī sect. A Kabīrpanthī fair is held here in the month of Māgh lasting for seven or eight days, at which converts are initiated as members of the sect. One of the Mahants, Ugranām Sāhib, also lived at Kudarmāl for a considerable time.

Lapha Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Laphagarh.—A large hill also known as Chittorgarh is in the Lāpha *zamīndāri*, about 30 miles north of Bilāspur in the Bilāspur tahsīl. Its elevation is 3240 feet and on the summit is an old fort with three gateways. The walls of the fort are irregular following the edge of the plateau. In some places the walls are of cut stone and in others of rubble. The gateways have been elaborately decorated with pillars and statues. Close to the Singhduāra gate is a temple built of cut stone in a very plain style like the temples at Wairāgarh. In the shrine is a broken statue of Mahāmāya or Devī. The people say that a European entered the temple and that the statue was broken in consequence of this; and they believe that the European afterwards died. Near the Menukā gate there is a natural cave, and in it a small *linga*. The zamīndār of Lāpha resides here during the month of

Shrāwan (July) and worships in the cave, and after this he celebrates the Kajalia festival, to which people from all parts of the zamīndāri are invited. A former Deputy Commissioner, Colonel Vertue, built a bungalow on the hill and resided in it during a part of the hot weather, but the bungalow has now been burnt down. There are four tanks on the summit, of which two contain water all the year round. The river Jatāshankari rises here, and there are a number of caves, while the scenery in the vicinity is very picturesque. At the base of the hill is a tract of dense forest.

The village of Tartūma or Lāpha, which is the zamīndāri headquarters, lies below the hill. It has a population of nearly 700 persons.

Lilagar River.—This stream rises in the Korbā zamīndāri and flows to the south separating the Bilāspur and Jānjgir tahsīls, until it joins the Seonāth near Boigaon. The Līlagar is crossed by the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway near Kotmi.

Mahamadpur.—A small village in the Jānjgir tahsīl, two miles north of Akaltarā on the Balodā road. It contains a large tank with a stone embankment, and several pieces of statuary, including some fine carvings, have been collected here. An inscription of the Kalachuri rulers of Ratanpur containing the names of Jājalladeva, Ratnadeva, Prithvīdeva and Vallabharāj was discovered in the village.

Mahanadi River[1] (The great river).—A great river in the Central Provinces and Bengal, with a total course of 550 miles, about half of which lies within the Central Provinces. The drainage area of the Mahānadi is estimated at about 43,800 square miles, of which about 27,000 square miles are in the Central Provinces. Owing to the rapidity of its current its maximum discharge in flood time near its mouth is estimated to be nearly 2 million cubic feet a second, or as great as that of the Ganges; in dry weather, however, the discharge dwindles to 1125 cubic feet a second, while the least discharge of the Ganges is estimated at 45,000 cubic feet. During

1. Reprinted from the article in the Imperial Gazetteer.

eight months of the year the river is nothing more than a narrow and shallow channel winding through a vast expanse of sand.

It rises in an insignificant pool, a few miles from the village of Sihāwa in the extreme south-east of the Raipur District (20° 9′ N. and 8° 58′ E.). In the first part of its course it flows to the north, drains the eastern portion of Raipur, its valley during the first 50 miles being not more than 500 or 600 yards broad. A little above Seorīnarāyan on touching the boundary of the Bilāspur District it receives the waters of its first great affluent the Seonāth, which in the Raipur District is a much more important river than the Mahānadi. The river flows in an easterly direction through Bilāspur, its principal tributaries being the Jonk and Hasdo. It then enters Sambalpur and turning south at the town of Padampur flows south and south-east through the Sambalpur District. Its affluents here are the Ib, Ong and Tel, and numerous minor streams. In Sambalpur it has already become a river of the first magnitude with a width of more than a mile in flood time, when it pours down a sheet of muddy water overflowing its submerged banks, carrying with it the boughs and trunks of trees, and occasionally the corpses of men and animals which it has swept away. From Sambalpur a magnificent view is obtained for several miles up and down the river, the breadth being almost doubled at the centre of a large curve below the town. The Mahānadi subsequently forms the northern boundary of the Tributary State of Baud in Orissa, and forces its tortuous way through the Orissa Tributary States, between ridges and ledges, in a series of rapids, until it reaches Dholpur. Boats shoot these rapids at a great pace, and on their return journey are dragged up with immense labour from the bank. During the rainy season the water covers the rocks, and suffices to float down huge rafts of timber. At Dholpur the rapids end, and the river rolls its unrestrained waters straight for the outermost line of the Eastern Ghāts. This mountain line is pierced by a gorge 40 miles in length, overlooked by hills and shaded forests on either side. The

Mahānadi finally leaves the Tributary States, and pours down upon the Orissa delta from between two hills a mile apart at Narāj, about 7 miles west of the town of Cuttack. It traverses Cuttack District from west to east, and throwing off numerous branches falls into the Bay of Bengal, by several channels, near False Point in 20° 18′ N. and 86° 43′ E.

On the right or south bank, soon after entering the Cuttack District, it gives off a large stream, the Kātjurī, the town of Cuttack being built upon the spit which separates the two rivers. The Kātjurī immediately divides into two, of which the southern branch, under the name of the Koyākhai, passes into Purī District; and shortly afterwards throws off the Suruā, which re-unites with the parent streams after a course of a few miles. A little lower down the Kātjurī throws off two minor distributaries from its right bank, the Great and Little Devī which unite after a southerly course of about 20 miles; and, under the name of the Devī, the combined stream passes into Purī District and falls into the Bay of Bengal, a few miles below the southern boundary of Cuttack. The Kātjurī ultimately falls into the Bay of Bengal under the name of the Jotdār. The other important southern distributary of the Mahānadi is the Paikā, which branches off from the parent stream 10 miles below Cuttack town, and rejoins it after a course of about 12 miles. It again branches off from the northern bank, and running in a loop joins the Mahānadi finally at Tikri, opposite Tāldanda. The offshoots from the left or north bank of the Mahānadi are the Birūpā and the Chitartala. The Birūpā takes off opposite the town of Cuttack, and, after flowing in a north-easterly direction for about 15 miles, throws off the Gengutī from its left bank. This stream after receiving the waters of the Kelo again falls into the Birūpā. The latter river afterwards joins the Brāhmanī and its waters ultimately find their way into the Bay of Bengal by the Dhāmra estuary. The Chitartala branch leaves the parent stream about 10 miles below the Birūpā mouth, and soon bifurcates into the Chitartala and the Nūn.

These streams unite, after a course of about 20 miles, and, under the name of the Nūn, the united waters fall into the Mahānadi estuary a few miles from the coast, and so into the Bay of Bengal.

In the upper parts of its course the bed is open and sandy, with banks usually low, bare and unattractive. After entering Sambalpur its course is broken in several places by rocks through which the river forms rapids, which are dangerous to navigation. Boats can, however, ascend the Mahānadi from its mouth as far as Arang in the Raipur District, about 120 miles from its source. Before the construction of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway the Mahānadi was the main outlet for the produce for the Sambalpur District, which was carried in boats to Cuttack; salt, cloth and other commodities being brought back in exchange. The through traffic has now, however, been almost entirely superseded by the railway, and there remains only a small amount of local trade between Sambalpur and Sonpur.

No use has hitherto been made of the waters of the Mahānadi for irrigation in the Central Provinces, but a project for a canal in the Raipur District is under consideration. Efforts have been made to husband and utilise the vast water-supply thus thrown down on the Orissa delta, and an elaborate system of canals, known as the Orissa Canals, has been constructed to regulate the water-supply for irrigation, and to utilise it for navigation and commerce. Large sums have also been spent on embankments to protect the delta from inundation of the floods which pour down the Mahānadi and its distributaries. A pontoon bridge is constructed across it in the dry season at Sambalpur and the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway crosses it by a bridge at Cuttack.

Maikal[1] Hill (or *Mekala*).—A range of hills in the Central Provinces and Central India, lying between 21° 11′ and 22° 40′ N. and 80° 46′ and 81° 46′ E. It is the connecting link between the great hill systems of Vindhyas and Sātpurās,

[1] Reprinted from the article in the Imperial Gazetteer.

forming respectively the northern and southern walls of the Nerbudda valley. Starting in the Khairāgarh State of the Central Provinces, the range runs in a general south-easterly direction for the first 46 miles in British territory, crossing the Bilāspur District from south-west to north-east along the border and then entering the Sohāgpur pargana of Rewah State, terminates 84 miles further at Amarkantak, one of the most sacred places in India, where the source of the Nerbudda river is situated. Unlike the two great ranges which it connects, the Maikal forms a broad plateau of 880 square miles in extent, mostly forest country inhabited by Gonds. The elevation of the range does not ordinarily exceed 2000 feet, but the Lāpha hill, which is a detached peak belonging to it, rises to 3500 feet. The range is best known for the magnificent forests of *sāl* (*Shorea robusta*) which clothe its heights in many places. These are mainly situated in zamīndāri estates or those of Feudatory chiefs and hence are not subject to any strict system of conservation, and have been much damaged by indiscriminate fellings. The hills are mentioned in ancient Hindu literature as the place of Malkala Rishi's penance, though Vyāsa, Bhrigu, Agastya, and other sages are also credited with having meditated in the forests. Their greatest claim to sanctity lies, however, in the presence upon them of the sources of the Nerbudda and Son rivers. The Mārkandeya Purāna relates how, when Siva called successively on all the mountains of India to find a home for the Nerbudda, only Maikal offered to receive her, thus gaining undying fame; and hence the Nerbudda is often called Maikal-Kanyā or 'daughter of Maikal.' The Mahānadi (Chhoti) and Johillā, as well as many minor streams, also have their sources in these hills. Local tradition relates that in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. during the Gupta rule, this plateau was highly populated; and the Rāmāyana and the Purānas mention the Mekhalās as a tribe of the Vindhya range, the former work placing them next the Utkalas or people of Orissa. The Rewah

State has lately begun to open up the plateau. Iron ore is met with in some quantity, and is still worked at about twenty villages to supply the local demand.

Mallar (Malhār).—A large village in the Bilāspur tahsīl, 16 miles south-east of Bilāspur and near the Līlagar river. Its elevation is 860 feet. The area of the village is 3500 acres and the population was 2000 persons in 1901, having been practically stationary during the preceding decade. The village was an important place in former times and contains numerous old ruins of temples and some large Jain naked figures. Many images have been removed but a considerable number still remain scattered over the ground. Several inscriptions have been found here and one of them, referring to the Kalachuri kings of Ratanpur with the date 919 of their era or 1167 A.D., has been removed to the Nāgpur Museum. There is a mud fort surrounded by a large moat, which affords a supply of water for irrigation both to Mallār and Budhikhār. The village has also 63 tanks, large and small, several of which are in good order and can be used for irrigation. Mallār has a primary school, and a weekly market is held on Wednesdays. The proprietor was Tīkāram Sao, the richest moneylender of the District, who owned more than 40 villages in the Bilāspur tahsīl. He is now dead and the property is now owned jointly by his nephews.

Maniari River.—This stream rises in the Lormi hills, and, flowing south and west through Lormi past the villages of Lormi and Takhatpur, separates the Bilāspur and Mungelī tahsīls for a considerable distance. After a circuitous course of about 70 miles it falls into the Seonāth river in the Tarengā estate about two miles from Dighori. The Agar meets the Maniāri near Kukusdā in the Mungelī tahsīl. The Maniāri has a wide straggling bed, but, except at intervals in the rains, contains no volume of water. In the hot and cold weather months many parts of its channel are quite dry, while in other places there are reaches of water, which are sometimes utilised for irrigation.

Manikpur.—A small village in the Kendā zamīndāri of the Bilāspur tahsīl, 15 miles north of Ratanpur. On a hill near the village are situated the remains of tanks, temples and other buildings.

Matin Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Mungeli Tahsil.—The western tahsīl of the District, lying between 21° 53′ and 22° 40′ N. and 81° 12′ and 82° 6′ E. In 1901 its area was 1794 square miles and population 255,045 persons. At the beginning of 1906 on the constitution of the Drug District, the southern part of the tahsīl was transferred to it. This comprised an area of 363 square miles containing 316 villages with a population of 83,650 persons. It was comprised roughly in the Nawāgarh and Māro Revenue Inspectors' circles. The southern boundary of the tahsīl will in future be an imaginary line running eastwards from the point forming the tri-junction of the Kawardhā State, the Pandaria zamīndāri and the mālguzāri area of Mungelī, to a point on the river Seonāth about 3 miles west of its confluence with the Maniāri. Another minor change is the transfer of an area of 21 square miles belonging to Bilāspur but lying west of the Maniāri to Mungelī. This area contains 23 villages with a population of 5712 persons. The revised area and population of Mungelī are 1452 square miles and 177,116 persons. The tahsīl is bounded on the north by the Mandlā District, on the south by the Drug and Raipur Districts, on the west by the Kawardhā State, while on the east the Maniāri river divides it from Bilāspur. It consists of a black cotton soil tract of small villages and comparatively large fields, without striking natural features. The Seonāth river, which bounds it for a few miles on the south-east, receives the drainage of practically the whole tahsīl. The principal streams are the Maniāri, with its tributaries, the Agar, the Rahan and the Teswā, and the Hānp and Phonk flowing into the Sakri. All these flow generally from north-west to south-east and their waters are

Description.

ultimately carried to the Seonāth. Along the north the Maikal range enters the tahsīl in the Pandaria and Lormi estates and there are large tracts of forest, amounting to 118 square miles in the zamīndāris and 446 of the Government reserves. But the central and southern area contains little or no forest and is noticeably bare of trees. The water-supply of many villages is also bad, and in the hot weather Mungelī is one of the most unpleasant parts of the Province from a touring point of view. There are a few stretches of absolutely level land such as the black-soil tract round Kathotia and Kodwā, and the plain south and south-east of Lormi. But, as a rule, the country is traversed by long low ridges of fairly black soil interspersed with limestone nodules. These differ widely from the gravel ridges found in the east and south of the District. There the village nearly always stands on gravel soil on the top of a ridge. But most of the Mungelī villages are on level black soil, and, where possible, the bank of a stream is chosen as the site. The most fertile part of the tahsīl lies to the south-west towards Kathotia, where there are level fields of good black soil. The centre is rendered less valuable by the ridges of rather pebbly black soil already referred to, while the least valuable villages are found in the forests of the north and north-east, and along the Seonāth river, where poor sandy alluvium covers a large area. The total forest area is 664 square miles or 46 per cent. of that of the tahsīl.

Population.

The population of the reconstituted tahsīl in 1901 was 177,116 persons or 19 per cent. of that of the District. Roughly the population has been reduced by about a third by the recent transfers. In 1891 the population of the present area was 248,740 persons and the decrease during the decade was 29 per cent. Mungelī suffered from a long succession of bad harvests during the last decade in addition to the famines of 1897 and 1900. The density of population is 122 persons per square mile, being higher than Bilāspur and lower than Jānjgir. There is one town Mungelī (population 5907) and 882

inhabited and 86 uninhabited villages. Besides Mungelī only Pandaria (3322) contained more than 2000 persons in 1901, while three villages, Pandātarai (1269), Patharia (1051) and Barelā (1044) contained between 1000 and 2000 persons.

Agriculture.

The tahsīl has two zamīndāri estates, Pandaria and Kanteli, whose combined area is 512 square miles or 7 per cent. of that of the District. The area of Government forest is 446 square miles, while another 100 square miles consist of tree forest and scrub jungle and grass in mālguzāri villages, the area of forest being 11 per cent. of the mālguzāri area. In the zamīndāris 118 square miles or 23 per cent. of the total are forest. Of the village area of 936 square miles, a proportion of 78 per cent. was occupied for cultivation in 1907-08, while the proportion of occupied area in the zamīndāris was 58 per cent. In 1907-08 the cultivated area was 400,995 acres and the net cropped area 335,397 acres. The statistics of cropping during the last three years are shown on the next page.

The famines caused a very serious decline in the area under rice and linseed and a considerable decrease of that under wheat In the last few years, however, there has been a satisfactory revival. The cropped area has recovered the position which it occupied before the famines, though the areas under rice and wheat still fall short of the level then attained A great impetus was given in the famines to the cultivation of kodon, which, from the comparatively small amount of moisture which the crop requires, came to be regarded as a sort of insurance against the effects of drought. Linseed shows a considerable improvement, and as in 1906-07 the rainfall was favourable for second crops, the pulses which are grown in the rice-fields in this manner were largely sown. In the black-soil fields of Mungelī kodon and wheat are sown in rotation.

Land Revenue.

In 1907-08 the demand for land revenue in the mālguzāri area was Rs. 93,797 and for cesses Rs. 5155. The average revenue

Statistics of cropping.

Year.		Rice.	Wheat.	Kodon-kutki.	Linseed.	Gram.	Cotton.	Til.	Tiurā-lākh.	Masūr.	Urad, mūng and moth.	Peas.	Sugarcane.	Double-cropped area.	Total cropped area (a).	Irrigated area.
1905-06	Khālsa ...	110,873	48,791	61,873	15,055	3427	110	1750	8718	7638	3851	19,324	287	41,003	290,789	600
	Zamīndāri ...	39,537	24,957	41,515	3891	1257	162	1733	745	4045	2244	7350	702	14,386	134,731	166
	Total ...	150,410	73,748	103,388	18,946	4684	272	3483	9463	11,683	6095	26,674	989	55,389	425,520	766
1906-07	Khālsa ...	101,127	47,423	10,432	28,916	2118	77	1662	16,838	7666	14,733	23,963	272	73,610	325,906	243
	Zamīndāri ...	35,274	22,125	49,181	5574	971	163	1638	790	3838	5805	10,173	878	19,978	144,056	56
	Total ...	136,401	69,548	59,613	34,490	3089	240	3300	17,628	11,504	20,538	34,136	1150	93,588	469,962	299
1907-08	Khālsa ...	108,351	30,838	8424	9215	1832	60	2032	5989	4044	8408	10,044	261	25,790	249,943	4063
	Zamīndāri ...	36,304	15,877	13,804	483	749	204	2656	118	2117	1071	2363	842	2136	113,380	358
	Total ..	144,655	46,715	22,228	9698	2581	264	4688	6107	6161	9479	12,407	1103	27,926	363,323	4421
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1907-08.		40	13	6	3	1	·07	1	2	2	3	3·4	·3	8	...	...

(a) Includes double-cropped area.

rate per acre for the tahsīl was R. 0-5-3. The *takolī* fixed or the zamīndāris lying in the tahsīl was Rs. 29,700 and the demand for cesses Rs. 3436. The whole tahsīl is now under settlement.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsīl is divided into four Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Sargaon, Kundā, Lormī and Pandaria and 88 patwāris' circles. It has three police Station-houses at Mungelī, Lormi and Pandaria with seven outposts subordinate to them. Of these outposts Kanteli, Patharia, Sargaon, Pendri, Līlapur are in the tahsīl. The other two, Kargi and Takhatpur, are within the Bilāspur tahsīl.

Mungeli Town.—The headquarters town of the Mungelī tahsīl, situated in 22° 4′ N. and 81° 42′ E., on the Agar river, 31 miles west of Bilāspur by road. Its area is 2900 acres and the population in 1901 was 5907 persons as against 4755 in 1891. The town is increasing in importance and is the centre of trade for most of the Mungelī tahsīl. Grain is usually sent to Bhātapāra station, 32 miles distant by road, but the construction of a narrow-gauge railway from Bilāspur to Mandlā through Mungelī is under contemplation. The provisions of the Village Sanitation Act are in force in the town and a sum of about Rs. 1000 is raised annually by a tax on incomes. Most of the existing wells have brackish water and in the hot weather a supply has to be obtained from holes dug in the bed of the river. A weekly market is held on Fridays. The town has the usual tahsīl buildings, a police Station-house, a dāk bungalow, a post office, a dispensary, a vernacular middle school, and a girls' school. A station of the American Unsectarian Mission known as the Disciples of Christ has been established here and supports a leper asylum with about 50 lepers, a dispensary and schools for boys and girls. The proprietor of the town is Ganpat Rao Amīn, a Marāthā Brāhman, who is an Assistant Surgeon in Government service, and local affairs are managed by his uncle. The founder of the family was a

revenue officer under the Bhonslas, who obtained a grant of Mungelī.

Nawagarh.—A large village in the Jānjgir tahsīl, 12 miles north of Jānjgir and 3 miles west of Bamnīdih. Its area is 4600 acres and the population in 1901 was 2050 persons, having increased by about a hundred during the preceding decade. The village has a primary school and a weekly market is held on Wednesdays. The proprietor is a Baniā.

Pali.—A small village in the Lāpha zamīndāri of Bilāspur tahsīl, 22 miles north-east of Bilāspur and 12 miles from Ratanpur, with a population of 250 persons. At the south-western extremity of the village is a fine tank with the remains of several temples on its banks. Of these all except one are now mere heaps of stone and were probably never of much importance. The one remaining temple, however, is one of the finest in the Central Provinces. Mr. Chisholm describes it as follows[1] :—

'What now remains is a large octagonal dome acting as 'the portico to an inner building, which was formerly dedicated 'to the service of Mahādeo. As you enter the dome you are 'at once struck with the minute and elaborate carvings which 'extend from the floor to the very summit of the building. 'The dome is supported by pillars on all of which are 'images of mythological characters famous in Hindu legend 'and song. Above these pillars the lower circle of the dome 'is a series of minute figures often chiselled into the 'most fantastic shapes. The most elaborate workmanship 'is, however, found at the entrance door to the inner build-'ing, where the carving is most minute and exquisitely 'executed.'

The temple was built by Jājalladeva whose name is inscribed on it in three places.

Pandaria Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

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[1] Settlement Report, para. 39.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

INTERIOR OF OLD TEMPLE, PALI.

Pandaria Village.—The headquarters of the Pandaria zamīndāri in the Mungelī tahsīl, situated 21 miles from Mungelī and 52 miles from Bilāspur by road. Its area is 2200 acres and the population was 3300 persons in 1901 as against 4400 in 1891. The village is surrounded by fine and extensive mango groves. It has some trade in timber and a weekly market is held on Mondays. It is the headquarters of a Revenue Inspector and contains a dispensary, a school, a police Station-house, a post office and a private girls' school supported by the zamīndār. An inspection bungalow has been erected. The zamīndār lives in a small house on the bank of the tank.

Pandatarai.—A village in the Pandaria zamīndāri of the Mungelī tahsīl, situated on the border between Pandaria and Kawardhā near the foot of the Maikal range. The place appears to have been of considerable importance in ancient times and cut stone and other remains of buildings are often found below the surface of the ground in the neighbourhood. Some temples still exist with fine carvings. The population of the village was under 1300 persons in 1901 as against nearly 1900 in 1891. It has a primary school, a police outpost and a branch post office.

Pendra Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Pendra Village—The headquarters of the Pendrā zamīndāri in the Bilāspur tahsil, situated five miles from Pendrā or Gaurelā station on the Bilāspur-Katnī line. Its area is 4600 acres and the population was 2500 persons in 1901 as against 1950 in 1891. The village has some trade in grain, and in lac and other minor forest produce. A weekly market is held on Sundays. The zamīndār lives at Sadhwāni, at a distance of four miles from Pendrā, and the fine residence which was built for him here, while the estate was under the Court of Wards, is occupied by his manager. The court-house and school are also substantial buildings, constructed by the Chhattīsgarh States Roads Department, during the management of the Court of Wards. The village is the

headquarters of a Revenue Inspector and has a dispensary and a post and telegraph office, and a police Station-house. The name is supposed to be derived from Pindāri, as several bands of these robbers formerly had their headquarters in the zamīndāri.

Pithampur.—A village in the Chāmpa zamīndāri on the western bank of the Hasdo river, 4 miles south of Chāmpa station, with a population of 600 persons. A fair, which is of quite recent date, is held here during the full moon of Phāgun lasting for six or seven days. It is said that the god Mahādeo appeared in a dream to a Teli and told him that his image was buried in the ground. The Teli dug up tho image and set it on the bank of the river and was thereby cured of dysentery. The zamīndār of Khariār was also troubled with a bad digestion and internal pain, and he built a temple over the image and became much better. In consequence of this people troubled with disorders of the stomach come to Pīthampur to be cured. The more devout worshippers make an offering of 100,000 grains of rice counted out, no imperfect or broken grains being included. The attendance at the fair is 20,000 persons or more.

Ratanpur.—A town in the Bilāspur tahsīl, situated in 22° 17′ N. and 82° 11′ E., 16 miles north of Bilāspur by road. The town is built at the base of the Kendā range and lies in a hollow almost surrounded by isolated hills so that nothing is seen of it until one actually enters its precincts. Ratanpur was for many centuries the capital of Chhattīsgarh under the Haihayavansī dynasty, and is believed to have been founded by King Ratnadeva I, after whom it is named, in the 10th century. It is said that at the height of its importance the town extended as far as Pāli, a village 12 miles distant in the direction of Lāpha. Its ruins still cover a large area and consist of numerous tanks and temples scattered among groves of mango trees. None of the temples are of much archæological interest. The ear-

Position and description of buildings.



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

AND TANK, RATANPUR

liest remains consist of the ruins of one or more temples whose pillars and sculptures have been utilised in the adornment of the gates and posterns of the fort, and of the buildings in the palace known as the Bādal Mahal. Within the fort a colonnade abutting against the interior face of the wall is composed entirely of ancient pillars, and the back wall is encrusted with sculpture. One of the scenes represented is that of the horse sacrifice; and another shows the penitent Rāvana cutting off his ten heads and offering them to the *linga*. Some inscriptions which were found here, but have now been removed, are referred to in the chapter on History. The existing temples are entirely modern, the principal ones being that of Bridheshwar Mahādeo and Bimbāji's temple to Rāmchandra on the hill called Rāmtek. This latter is visible from a considerable distance. There is also a temple of Mahāmaya and in the collection of statues near it are several Jain figures. Near this temple is a banyan tree up which it is believed that the groom of Ratnadeva climbed in the night and saw the gods and goddesses disporting themselves; and this sight led to the founding of Ratanpur. The goddess is said to have once devoured a prince and one of her faces is consequently turned backwards. A tradition exists that a Haihaya prince was once offered as a sacrifice to the goddess. The town now contains about 300 tanks, most of them very small and filled with stagnant greenish water, and several hundred temples. Many *satī* monuments to the queens of the Haihayavansī dynasty also remain. The most prominent of these is near the old fort, where a large building, gracefully adorned on all sides with arches and minarets, proclaims that here some 270 years ago twenty queens of Rājā Lakshman Sahai became voluntary martyrs to Brahmanical cruelty and popular feeling.

Population and industries.

The area of Ratanpur village is more than 11,000 acres and its population was 5479 persons in 1901 as against 6389 in 1891. The population has declined largely

even in recent years and the remains of ruined houses are numerous. The large Dulahrā tank extends over 180 acres. There are several other tanks from which a large area of sugarcane and vegetable is annually irrigated. Betel-vine is also grown in considerable quantities, and the quality of the leaf is considered to be very good. The supply of water is so ample that the crops never fail from drought, and in a year of scarcity the cultivators are enriched by the high prices which they obtain for their produce. The principal industry consists of the manufacture of vessels of bell-metal, and a peculiarly bright polish is given to the surface of the metal which makes it appear almost as light in colour as nickel. Glass bangles are also made. A small fair of the Satnāmi Chamārs is held here on the last day of Māgh (January-February). They bathe in the Dulahrā tank, which they consider to be sacred, and also throw locks of their children's hair and the bones of their dead into the tank. The climate of the place is unhealthy and the inhabitants are afflicted with goitre and *elephantiasis*. Brāhmans, Baniās, Kalārs, and Sonārs are found in fairly large numbers as residents. Several proprietors of other villages reside here and some of them have cultivation in Ratanpur; but the distinctive element of the population, Mr. Chisholm wrote, is a large section of lettered Brāhmans, the hereditary holders of rent-free villages, who are the interpreters of the sacred writings and the ministers of religious ceremonies for a great portion of Chhattīsgarh. A bench of Honorary Magistrates has been constituted here. The town has a vernacular middle school, a branch school and a Government girls' school and a police Station-house. The only accommodation for visitors is an inspection hut. The proprietor of the village is Khande Rao, son of Ganpat Rao, Brāhman, who is heavily involved. His grandfather was a Kamaishdār under the Marāthās and was given the village at the settlement of

1863. The provisions of the Village Sanitation Act are in force in the town.

Salkhan—A large village in the Jānjgir tahsīl about 15 miles south of Jānjgir towards Seorīnarāyan. Its area is nearly 3700 acres and the population was 2400 persons in 1901 as against 2000 in 1891. The village has a number of tanks, from which a considerable area can be irrigated and excellent sugarcane is grown. It has a primary school and a weekly market is held on Thursdays. The proprietor is a well-to-do Kurmī.

Satpura Hills.—A range of hills in the centre of India. The name, which is modern, originally belonged only to the hills which divide the Nerbudda and Tāpti valleys in Nimār (Central Provinces), and which were styled the *sāt putra* or seven sons of the Vindhyan mountains. Another derivation is from *sāt purā* (seven fold), referring to the numerous parallel ridges of the range. The term Sātpurā is now, however, customarily applied to the whole range, which, commencing at Amarkantak in Rewah, Central India (22° 40′ N., 81° 46′ E.), runs south of the Nerbudda river nearly down to the western coast. The Sātpurās are sometimes, but incorrectly, included under the Vindhya range. Taking Amarkantak as the eastern boundary the Sātpurās extend from east to west for about 600 miles, and in their greatest depth exceed 100 miles from north to south. The shape of the range is almost triangular. From Amarkantak an outer ridge runs south-west for about 100 miles to the Sāletekri hills in the Bālāghāt District, thus forming as it were the head of the range. This is known as the Maikal range which crosses through a portion of the Bilāspur District. The Sātpurās as they proceed westward from a broad tableland to two parallel ridges end, so far as the Central Provinces are concerned, at the famous hill fortress of Asīrgarh. Beyond this point the Rājpipla hills, which separate the valley of the Nerbudda from that of the Tāpti, complete the chain as far as the Western Ghāts. On the

tableland comprised between the northern and southern faces of the range are situated the Districts of Mandlā, part of Bālāghāt, Seonī, Chhindwāra and Betūl.

The highest peaks are contained in the northern range rising abruptly from the valley of the Nerbudda and generally sloping down to the plateau, but towards the west the southern range has the greater elevation. Another noticeable feature is a number of small tablelands lying among the hills at a greater height than the bulk of the plateau. Of these Amarkantak in the Rewah State (3000 feet) had once been selected as a military sanitarium, Pachmarhī (3530 feet) and Chikaldā in Berār (3664 feet) have been formed into hill stations, while Raigarh (2200 feet) in the Bālāghāt District and Khāmla in Betūl (3700 feet) are famous grazing and breeding grounds for cattle. Dhūpgarh (4454 feet) is the highest point on the range, and there are a few others of over 4000. Among the peaks that rise from 3000 to 3800 feet above sea-level, the grandest is Turanmāl (Bombay Presidency), a long rather narrow tableland 3300 feet above the sea and about 16 square miles in area. West of this the mountainous land presents a wall-like appearance both towards the Nerbudda on the north and the Tāpti on the south. On the eastern side the Tāsdin Vali (Central India) commands a magnificent view of the surrounding country. The general height of the plateau is about 2000 feet.

Seonath River (From the god Siva and *nāth*, a master).—The river containing much the largest supply of water in the District, rises in the hills of the Pānabāras zāmīndāri of the Drug District and flows in a direction for the most part north-east for about 16 miles, forming the boundary between the Khujji zamīndāri of the Sanjāri tahsīl of the Drug District and the Nāndgaon State. It then passes through the Nāndgaon State flowing in the same direction and from *mauzā* Jholā it forms again for about 3 miles the boundary between the Drug tahsīl and the Nāndgaon State. Then entering the tahsīl it flows by Drug town almost due

north through the tahsīl and at *mauzā* Mangrol in the Bemetarā tahsīl it takes a bend and flows almost due east and meets the Raipur District at a place about 4 miles south of Simgā. From this place for about 3 miles it forms the boundary between the Raipur and Drug Districts till it is joined by the Hānp river from the west, a distance of 120 miles from its source. After this junction it turns eastward for about 40 miles till it joins the Mahānadi in the north-east corner of the District at Changāri, 4 miles west of Seorī-narāyan, forming the boundary between the Raipur and the Bilāspur Districts. During its course its tributaries are on the left bank proceeding from the south the Ghumuria, Sombarsa, Amner Suri, Doti, and Kurrodh all in the Drug District; on the right bank the Khekhrā and Tandulā in the Drug District, and the Khārun, Jamania and Khorsi in the Raipur District. Numerous other small nullahs also flow into it. The Seonāth and its tributaries flow in deep and well defined beds which have often been cut out of rock. They contain water when the eastern system is quite dry. The bed of the river is generally sandy for nearly the whole distance, but near Simgā and in Tarengā are some rocks. Its width is about three furlongs at Mahamara on the Nāgpur road where it crosses the river 2 miles from Drug. Its banks are 20 to 50 feet high. During its course the river is crossed by the railway; once at a mile below the road near Mohlai village about 2 miles from Drug, and again on the border of the Raipur and Bilāspur Districts at *mauzā* Garhā, 4 miles north of Nipania railway station. The Tandulā river and Seonāth meet near Changāri in the Drug tahsīl where there is a fine mango grove of 85 acres and an island in the river on which guavas are grown. At Arjuni also in the Bemetarā tahsīl and at Jhinjhiri in the Drug tahsīl there are islands in which there are guava gardens. Yams, melons and cucumbers are grown on the sandy stretches in the bed of the river. Slate stones are found in the bed of the Seonāth at Bazarbhāta in

Balodā Bazār tahsīl. White stone, which is used for lithography, is found near Chandkhurī. The deeper pools are infested by alligators. The story of the origin of the Seonāth is that a Gond girl named Shiva was carried off by a Gond boy who wished to marry her forcibly after the fashion of the Gonds. But she refused and he killed her and threw her body into a ravine; and from this the Seonāth began to flow. Its total length is about 160 miles.

Seorinarayan.—A village in the Jānjgir tahsīl, 39 miles south-east of Bilāspur on the old Sambalpur road and situated at the junction of the Mahānadi and Jonk rivers. The Seonāth flows into the Mahānadi about a mile higher up. The name is supposed to be a corruption of Sawar Nārāyan, and it is said to have been called after an old Sawarā or Saonr, who lived in the forest where the town now stands and worshipped Jagannāth. The image which he revered was subsequently discovered by a Brāhman and removed to Orissa, where it is now in the temple of Jagannāth at Puri. But as a reward for the faithfulness of his old worshipper, Jagannāth ordained that the place of his concealment in the forest should be called after both their names and hence has come its title of Sawar Nārāyan. Seorīnarāyan was until 1891 the headquarters of the present Jānjgir tahsīl, and the change was effected owing to the tahsīl buildings at the former place being liable to damage from floods on the Mahānadi and to its being away from the railway line. The population was 1750 persons in 1901 as against 2250 in 1891. The village consists of two separate *mahāls*, known as Mahantpāra and Bhogahāpāra. The proprietor of the first is Gautam Dās Mahant and of the second Jadunāth Bhogahā, so called because he supplies food to the deities of the place and to religious mendicants at the temples. For this purpose he holds a grant of six villages free of revenue. Adjoining the village is a very fine and extensive grove of old mango trees. The temple to Nārāyan, from which the place takes its name, is supposed from an inscription on one of its tablets to have



Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

been built in the year 898 of the Kalachuri era or 1146 A.D. It is interesting only on account of its antiquity and possesses no architectural beauty, as it was once struck by lightning and the walls have been plastered over to hide the defacement. Close to the river is a small tank called the Rohini Kund, in which people place the bones of their dead. Seorīnarāyan was formerly a favourite residence of the Ratanpur court and the royal ladies often came here to bathe in the Mahānadi. A small fair is held here on the last day of Māgh (January-February), continuing for five or six days. The village has a police Station-house, a branch post office and a vernacular middle school. A weekly market is held on Wednesdays.

Son River[1] (Sanskrit Suvarna or gold; also called Hiranyavāha or Hiranya-vāhu, the Sonos of Arrian; also identified with the Erannoboas of Arrian).—A large river, which, flowing from the Amarkantak highlands of Central India (22° 42′ N., 82° 4′ E.) first north and then east, joins the Ganges, ten miles above Dinãpur, after a course of about 487 miles.

It rises near *mauzā* Jāmri in the Pendrā zamīndāri of the Bilāspur District, but its traditional source is near the Nerbudda at Amarkantak, the hill from which it springs located being called Son-bhadra or more commonly Son-mundā. Its waters possess great sanctity, the performance of *sandhyā* on its banks ensuring absolution and the attainment of heaven even to the slayer of a Brāhman. Legends about the stream are numerous, one of the most picturesque assigning the origin of the Son and Nerbudda to two tears dropped by Brahmā, one on either side of the Amarkantak range. The Son is frequently mentioned in Hindu literature, in the Rāmāyanas of Vālmīki and Tulsī Dās, the Bhāgvat and other works. Soon after leaving Amarkantak the son (so called) falls in a cascade over the edge of the Amarkantak plateau amid the most picturesque surroundings. The real

[1] Reprinted from the article in the Imperial Gazetteer of the U. P.

stream runs through the level plateau of the Pendrā zamīndāri till it enters Rewah State in 23° 6′ N. and 81° 59′ E. Its course in the Bilāspur District is about 36 miles. From this point, till it leaves the Central India Agency after a course of 288 miles, the stream flows through a maze of valley and hill, for the most part through narrow rocky channels, but expanding in favourable spots into magnificent deep broad reaches locally called Dahār, the favourite resorts of the fisher caste.

Following at first a northerly course, near its junction with the Mahānadi river at Sarsi it meets the bold scarp of the Kaimur range and is turned in a north-easterly direction, finally leaving the Agency 5 miles east of Deorā village. In Central India three other affluents of importance are received, one on the left bank, the Johilā, which rises at Amarkantak and enters at Barwālu village, and two which join it on the right bank, the Banās at 24° 17′ N. and 81° 31′ E. and the Gopat near Bardī.

In the United Provinces the Son flows for about 55 miles from west to east across the Mirzāpur District, in a deep valley never more than eight or nine miles broad, often narrowing to a gorge, and receives from the south two tributaries, the Rehand and the Kanhar. In the dry season it is shallow, but rapid, varies in breadth from 60 to 100 yards, and is easily fordable.

The Son enters Bengal in 24° 31′ N., 83° 24′ E., and flows in a north-westerly direction separating the District of Shāhabād from Palāmau, Gayā, and Patnā till, after a course within Bengal of 144 miles, it falls into the Ganges in 25° 40′ N., 84° 59′ E. So far as regards navigation, its stream is mainly used for floating down large rafts of bamboos and a little timber. In the rainy season, native boats of large tonnage occasionally proceed for a short distance up stream; but navigation is then rendered dangerous by the extraordinary violence of the flood, and during the rest of the year it becomes impassable, owing to the small depth of water. The great irrigation system known as the Son Canals is served

by the river, the water being distributed west to the Shāhabād District and east to the Gayā and Patnā District from an anicut constructed at Dehrī. In the lower portion of its course the Son is marked by several striking characteristics. Its bed is enormously wide, in some places stretching for three miles from bank to bank. During the greater part of the year this broad channel is merely a waste of drifting sand, with an insignificant stream that is nearly everywhere fordable. The discharge of water at this time is estimated to fall as low as 620 cubic feet per second. But in the rainy season, and especially just after a storm has burst on the plateau of Central India, the river rises with incredible rapidity. The entire rainfall of an area of about 21,300 square miles requires to find an outlet by this channel, which frequently proves unable to carry off the total flood discharge, calculated at 830,000 cubic feet per second. These heavy floods are of short duration, seldom lasting for more than four days; but in recent years they have wrought much destruction in the low-lying plains of Shāhabād. Near the site of the great dam at Dehrī the Son is crossed by the Grand Trunk Road on a stone causeway; and lower down, near Koelwār, the East Indian Railway has been carried across on a lattice girder bridge. This bridge, begun for a single line of rails in 1855, and finally completed for a double line in 1870, has a total length of 4199 feet from back to back of the abutments. The Son possesses historical interest as being probably identical with the Erannoboas of Greek geographers, which is thought to be a corruption of Hiranyabāhu, or 'the golden-armed' (a title of Siva), a name which the Son anciently bore. The old town of Pālibothrā or Pātaliputra corresponding to the modern Patnā was situated at the confluence of the Erannoboas and the Ganges, and, in addition, we know that the junction of the Son with the Ganges has been gradually receding westwards. Old channels of the Son have been found between Bānkipore and Dinā-pur, and even below the present site of Patnā. In the

Bengal Atlas of 1772 the junction is marked near Maner, and it would seem to have been at the same spot in the 17th century; it is now (1904) about 10 miles higher up the Ganges.

Takhatpur.—A large village in the Bilāspur tahsīl on the border of Mungelī, 18 miles west of Bilāspur on the Mungelī road and situated on the Maniāri river. Its area is 2100 acres and the population was 2600 persons in 1901 as against 2100 in 1891. Takhatpur is named after one Takhat Singh, a Haihaya Prince who founded it. The village has a considerable trade in grain and a number of Baniās, Cutchis and other traders reside here. A market for the sale of cattle and general merchandise is held on Fridays and is largely attended. Guavas of superior quality are grown in the village and are exported to Calcutta. There is excellent *kachhār* land on the banks of the Maniāri on which sugarcane and vegetables are raised. The village has a vernacular middle school, a girls' school and a branch post office. The proprietor is a Bairāgi lady.

Tuman.—A small village in the Lāpha *zamīndāri* of the Bilāspur *tahsīl*, about 60 miles from Bilāspur and 45 miles from Ratanpur with a population of nearly 400 persons. The following description of the place has been drawn up by Mr. Hīra Lāl who has visited it, and the statements made in it rest on his authority. He considers that Tumān was the first capital of the Haihaya kings when they came to Chhattīsgarh. It is mentioned in an inscription[1] of Jājalladeva I, dated in the year 1114 A.D., that his ancestor Kalingarāja settled at Tumān; and the capital was afterwards removed to Ratanpur by Ratnadeva I, the grandfather of Jājalladeva. Tumān is situated in a valley surrounded on all sides by a ring of mountains and affording egress at only two points towards Uprorā and Mātin in the east and west. Inside the valley are situated about 16 villages known as the Tumān Khol. The whole place would have been well suited for the

[1] Epi. Ind., Vol. I, p. 34.

first settlement of a small invading force, being secluded and easily defensible against the attacks of barbarian enemies. The former extent of the place can be deduced from the many remains of tanks and temples. The local tradition is to the effect that there were once *chhai agar chhai kori talao* or six score and six (126) tanks here. In one place about 125 yards square Mr. Hīra Lāl discovered some fifteen heaps of ruins of cut and carved stones. These were principally temples and in the central heap after the removal of the débris he found a fine gateway. On the top of it were the images of Brahmā, Vishnu and Siva, the last being in the centre and indicating that the temple was dedicated to that deity. Between the images were carved the figures of the nine planets and on the door jambs those of the ten incarnations of Vishnu, and below them the Ganges on her crocodile and the Jumna on her tortoise. All these figures are well carved in the same style as the temples of Pāli or Jānjgir. Close by is the river Jatāshankari, and on its bank is a heap of ruins of cut stone, the place being known as the Satkhandā Mahal or seven-storied palace, and this may possibly have been formerly the residence of the kings. The description here given by Mr. Hīra Lāl is the first which has been published of Tumān.

Uprora Zamindari.—See Zamīndāris.

Zamindaris.—The zamīndāris of the Bilāspur District are ten in number. Two of them lie wholly in the open country; a third, half hill and half plain, lies in the extreme west; and the remaining seven, known as the 'Seven Forts' (Sāt Garh), monopolise almost the whole of the hill country to the north of Bilāspur. They are of varying extent, but cover together no less than 4236 square miles or five-ninths of the whole District. But little is known of the detailed history of the individual estates. Their continued existence during the many political changes of the last three hundred years, and the development of the present rights and liabilities of the zamīndārs can best be explained in a general survey. The

points of interest connected with each separate estate can then be briefly summarised.

2. The opening chapter in their history covers the whole period of Hindu and Marāthā rule down to the year 1821 A.D. when the zamīndāris in their present form were recognised for the first time by a representative of the British Government. Oral traditions, the relics of ancient institutions, and scanty references in official documents are all we have to guide us in reconstructing even the most elementary outline of their development in early times. In all old Hindu kingdoms there are found uniform traces of a central king's domain (*khālsa*) surrounded by more or less independent estates to protect it from pillage and invasion. This is the normal type to which the Haihaya kingdom was no exception. But it has heretofore been generally presumed that this king's domain exactly corresponded with what we know as *khālsa* at the present day, and that our zamīndāris are survivals of the ancient marches which surrounded the fertile level country and formed its protection from outside attack. The case is not so simple. Quotations from a Revenue Book of the 16th century (preserved in the Settlement Reports of 1868) tell us that in the reigns of Kalyān Sahai and his son the *whole* of the Chhattis Garh—that is to say, *all* the 36 or more *chaurāsis* into which the Rājputs divided the country for administrative purposes—were under the king's direct management.[1] These formed the 'khālsa parganas,' as they are there called, and outside and around these *Chhattīs Garh* lay still more distant tracts of country held by semi-independent Rājās as feudatory states. How then did the numerous 'zamīndāris' of our own time come into existence within Chhattīsgarh proper? And how was the king's domain brought down to the narrow limits of our *khālsa*—limits which in the later Rājput and early Marāthā days, before the zamīndārs of Nawāgarh and Mungelī (and others no doubt of whom we have no record) were ousted from their

[1] See Hewitt's Raipur Settlement Report of 1868, para. 56.

estates, were far narrower even than they are at present? An explanation has been offered in Chapter II of this volume. It was there suggested that the *chaurāsis*, or administrative units of Chhattīsgarh, were at first held by an official class wholly dependent on the sovereign, but that a customary privilege grew up around each office rendering it hereditary and endowing it with considerable executive as well as fiscal powers; and that finally the more fortunate among these officials became in the 17th and 18th centuries the local chiefs of the areas within their charge. But such full local authority could only develop out of the weakness of the central power, and the position of hereditary chieftains could only be assumed when royal interference was comparatively rare. Hence it came about that a distinction arose between those *chaurāsis* of Chhattīsgarh proper in which hereditary officials were conceded a prescriptive title to their charge, and the areas more central, and therefore more easy to control, in which a frequent change of management, as the result of royal favour or caprice, prevented the growth of any customary claims. In the former we may trace the origin of our zamīndāris, while in the latter lay the nucleus of our present *khālsa* lands.

3. By the close of Rājput rule the number of these hereditary officials in possession of parganas was probably very large, and it is doubtful whether the king's immediate control extended over more than the three or four open-country parganas which lay nearest to Ratanpur. But the area under direct royal management always varied as the king was strong or weak, and once the Marāthās took possession of the country the increase of the *khālsa* (in our modern sense) was very rapid. These invaders had no real antipathy to the Rājput régime, and indeed accepted for 17 years a representative of the Haihaya house as king of Ratanpur. But they were bent on extracting from the country the maximum amount of money possible; while Bimbājī, who established himself in Ratanpur from A.D. 1758 to 1787, was equally

determined to favour his own followers at the expense of the servants of the older dynasty. Hence the number of old hereditary officials was soon reduced, while the *khālsa* jurisdiction, which simply meant the area controlled by Marāthā *Kamaishdārs* and their *patels* in place of the local *Dīwāns* and *Daos*, spread rapidly over the bulk of the open country, until it embraced the limits which have now become stereotyped under the British rule.

4. This rough sketch is sufficient to establish the varying and accidental character of the distinction between 'khālsa' and 'zamīndāris'; and shows, as regards the latter, with which we are especially concerned, how largely fortuitous was the growth of their peculiar status. It is certain that what have been called the 'quasi-sovereign rights' of the zamīndārs, as heads of abnormal units of the body politic, were throughout an unauthorised development. There is not a line of evidence to suggest that the zamīndārī status within Chhattīsgarh proper, such as we found when we took over the country in 1854, was in origin a deliberate creation by the central power. The only deed produced as evidence of this (a copper plate from Lāpha) has been proved to be a manifest forgery. The neglect of all local administration by the king forced certain duties on his official subordinates. These duties became customary, and involved in their performance the maintenance of some local authority by the land-officers. This authority was in many of the parganas never checked, and eventually commanded the acquiescence of the Marāthās and the respect of our own administration. As new growths encroach on land left long untilled by a feeble husbandman, so, as the power of the Rājput kings declined, new authorities grew up in parts of the country beyond their easy reach. Had no outside power intervened, it is possible that in course of time the country would have lapsed into a chaos of petty struggling chieftaincies, such as that described by Sir R. Jenkins in the old Waingangā District. But the strong arm of the Marāthās

soon crushed this tendency, and once more asserted the central authority over a wide area of country. Bimbāji was himself responsible for this. But he also seems to have regarded many of the old hereditary officers with tolerance. With the government however by Sūbahdārs which followed Bimbāji's decease, all concession to local feeling was refused. Bimbāji was a hard master, but the Sūbahdārs who followed him exchanged his whips for scorpions. The zamīndārs of Mungelī and Nawāgarh, the only Dīwāns of the open country who remained in undisturbed possession of their old *chaurāsis*, were blown from the mouth of cannon and their estates were forfeited to government. Possibly being Gonds, they were suspected of intriguing with the Partābgarh Gond Rājā mentioned by Blunt, who was at war about this time with the Marāthās. The Pendrā estate was resumed, probably on a similar plea, and Korbā too was temporarily seized. That any of the zamīndārs survived the greed and violence of the petty sūbahs must be attributed solely to the physical configuration of the country which they held. It was not without reason that in older days the zamīndārs in Pandaria, Kendā, Lāpha, Chhuri and Korbā—wherever the estates adjoined the open country—had established their headquarters immediately below the hills. Their confidence in them was not misplaced. The exiled Marāthā had always the strongest aversion to a first hand acquaintance with these mountain tracts, haunted in his imagination by cannibals and tigers and the special abode of all malignant agencies so common in earlier times in Chhattīsgarh. They hesitated to undertake the management of such a country and meanwhile left them in the hands of the old local chiefs, and the more readily perhaps, because the presents which they brought to Ratanpur formed the most valued perquisite of the post of Sūbahdār.

Early British administration.

5. When therefore the British Regency began and Colonel Agnew was sent in 1818 as Superintendent of Chhattīsgarh, he found eight of the old *chaurāsis* in the hills

still in the possession of their ancestral holders. His arrival was the prelude to administrative improvements of the most far-reaching kind. The zamīndār of Pendrā was reinstated, and the family of the Mungelī chief was provided for by a grant of some 30 villages round Kanteli. The arrears of revenue outstanding against the great landholders 'due to their utter inability to liquidate them' which had run into lakhs of rupees were remitted; their tribute was reduced; and finally in 1821 a formal agreement was given to every zamīndār in Chhattīsgarh, which for the first time gave each of them official recognition from the British Government. These engagements, of which a specimen is preserved in Aitchison's Volume of Treaties (No. CXL), formed the opening step in a new administrative era.

6. Interest in the subsequent history of these estates centres, firstly, in their material development during the 86 years which have since elapsed, and secondly in the measures taken in more recent times to incorporate them gradually in the routine administration of the District. The enormous stimulus to agriculture and forest exploitation afforded by a stable administration and improved communications is nowhere so well emphasised as here; and a simple recapitulation of the rise in income and of the details of periodical revisions of revenue assessment is sufficient to prove this. For nearly 50 years from 1821 to 1867 the zamīndārs of Bilāspur continued, save for a single readjustment in 1855 on account of the higher exchange value of the new 'Company's rupee,' to pay the *takolīs* (quit revenue) fixed in 1821 by Colonel Agnew. The total sum contributed during all this time by the present ten estates of Bilāspur was 13,355 Company's rupees. The period was one of steady unobtrusive development. The restitution of Marāthā rule from 1830 to 1855 had no ill effect owing to the restraining influence of the Nāgpur Resident. In 1857 although the paramount British authority had only been recently established, the zamīndārs, with the one doubtful exception of Pandaria, were loyal

to the new régime, and during the operations in Sohāgpur every assistance was given to the British force by the northern zamīndārs. When therefore ten years later the first detailed settlement of Bilāspur was undertaken, a marked increase in income enabled the Settlement Officer to secure a large enhancement. The system followed was a simple one. No survey was attempted. A 'fair rent,' generally 6 annas per acre, was applied to a rough estimate of the area under cultivation in each village. Half the figure so obtained, modified in the light of present payments and the Settlement Officer's appraisement of the paying capacity of the holder, gave him his 'proposed assessment' of the village, and one-fourth of the total proposed assessment was fixed as the land-revenue *takolī* of the whole estate. One half of the estimated income from other sources, forest, excise, and *pāndhri* (a property tax), was also fixed as the zamīndār's contribution to Government under these various heads, and the whole assessment was imposed for 20 years. By this resettlement the payments of the ten zamīndārs of Bilāspur, on account of land-revenue and forests, was fixed at Rs. 18,530 and their total contribution raised from Rs. 11,628 (sterling) to Rs. 23,037. Their total income from land and forests only was estimated at this time at Rs. 57,393. From 1867 onwards the development of the country was still more rapid, in spite of the famine of 1869 and the scarcity of 1878. Road communications were being rapidly extended, and just at the close of the 20 years' settlement the opening of the railway from Nāgpur to Calcutta, with a branch line through Kendā and Pendrā to the junction at Katnī, revolutionised the conditions of trade and export. Their altered circumstances had tempted some of the zamīndārs into great extravagances; and Kanteli, Mātin, Pendrā, Chhuri and Pandaria had all to be brought under Government control at different times, in order to enable them to clear off their debts. But, in all but the first mentioned estate, solvency was easily regained owing to the enormous addition to their incomes secured by

the new market for timber and other forest produce which the railway had created. Meanwhile the zamīndāri assessment was again revised on summary lines. But now (in 1890) a new principle of assessment widely different from that of 1867 was introduced, in so far as revision was based on actual and not on estimated figures, on rents and village collections as actually paid at the time of enquiry and not as considered by the Settlement Officer to be 'payable' in the villages of each estate. Though theoretically sound in practice the method was misleading, for the revision of *takolīs* was naturally a signal for all the zamīndārs, except those under Government management, to re-adjust their income from their villages to meet the increased demand by Government. The revised *takolīs* in consequence were never paid from an income at all resembling that on the basis of which they had been calculated. The false impression conveyed by this system actually resulted in a reduction of some of the *takolīs* in 1894 on the supposition that they represented too high a percentage of the zamīndārs' assets. The general result of this re-assessment of 1890 was to raise the total forest and land-revenue *takolī* in the ten estates to Rs. 56,010, and their total contribution to Government from Rs. 33,307 to Rs. 65,030. The unrevised total income, on which the land-revenue and forest *takolī* was based, amounted to Rs. 1,36,467, but this was nearly doubled in some of the estates in the next year (1891) and is now in 1907 no less than Rs. 2,08,018 in spite of the famine era which has intervened.

These figures are remarkable. Neglecting the assessment of 1821 as fixed at a very low figure because of the political exigencies of the time, the increase even since 1868 is very striking. During these 40 years the zamīndārs' total income from land and forests has risen from Rs. 57,393 to Rs. 2,08,018, while the number of inhabited villages has increased from 869 to 1140, and the population from 144,391 to 259,011. The rights of tenants and village headmen have been recognised and recorded. Village maps have been prepared,

and in revenue matters the zamīndāris have, since the Tenancy Act was extended to them in 1889, been gradually brought into line with the rest of the District. The usual complement of police posts, cattle pounds, liquor shops and schools complete the administrative picture. The people are prosperous and satisfied, their wealth is increasing, and their cultivation rapidly extends. The zamīndārs themselves have been of course the largest participants in the general material development of their estates.

7. Side by side with the opening of this backward country, as cultivation spread and prices rose, as trade in timber and other jungle produce was created, and as the pressure of population increased, it became necessary to resume gradually such extraordinary powers as these petty chiefs had inherited from mediæval days. Fitted no doubt to dispense rude justice to the forest-folk and wild non-Aryan tribes who alone peopled these estates in early times, the zamīndārs under a settled administration of a modern type could hardly expect to retain their old authority and privileges untrammelled. While enjoying to an unusual degree the material benefits of a centralised government, they had in fairness to surrender many delegated sovereign rights which under the new system became inherent in the Government. The first step in this direction was taken as early as 1821 when the rights to collect customs (*sāyar*) and inflict capital punishment were withdrawn from such the of zamīndārs as possessed them. But as Sir R. Jenkins wrote 'the engagements of this date 'were framed on the general principle that, whilst no unneces-'sary sacrifice of the revenue or rights of Government should 'be made, a liberal system should be pursued towards the 'zamīndārs.' Financial considerations were in fact subordinated to the need for conciliating these petty chieftains in order to avoid having to coerce them 'in parts of the country unfavourable to the prosecution of military operations.' During the next 40 years but little ostensible change was made, but as a natural result of the consolidation of the central power

'further restrictions of an indefinite kind were gradually 'placed on the zamīndārs' exercise of administrative functions.' At last in 1861 A.D. Sir Richard Temple reviewed for the first time the whole question of the zamīndāri status. Whatever the exact intentions of Government may have been, the net result of the enquiry was, firstly, that all the zamīndārs of Bilāspur were formally declared in 1864 to be 'ordinary British subjects,' and, secondly, that five years later a vernacular *sanad* was issued to each zamīndār conferring on him proprietary rights in his estate subject to the provisions of the 'zamīndāri administration paper.' This latter document, as interpreted by the local officers of the time, was of so comprehensive a character that Mr. Chisholm (para. 312 of his report) defined the action of the settlement as 'under sanction 'directed to recognising the zamīndāri tenure in all its peculiarities' and as 'maintaining the *status quo ante*.' It announced that the revenue from land, forests, *abkāri* (excise), *pāndhri* (a property tax), ferries and pounds was to be enjoyed by the zamīndār, and that he would maintain his own police. It re-affirmed the immemorial custom of succession by primogeniture, and, in deference to the general desire of the zamīndārs themselves, provided for admitting the title of widows to the succession in default of a more suitable direct claimant. The whole arrangement was one extremely favourable to the zamīndārs, and was an almost too generous concession to a class of men whose claims for consideration had already become a matter largely of sentiment.

But even while Mr. Chisholm wrote that the 'status quo ante' was being maintained the need for further restriction of the zamīndāri privilege had arisen in an isolated case, and orders were issued in 1867 to resume without compensation the excise monopoly of Kanteli. General measures of this kind were not taken, however, till 20 years later, by which time the improved administration of the open country had begun to throw into strong relief the inadequate provision made by the zamīndārs for the proper management

of their estates. The defects were more negative than positive, and were felt not so much as an injustice to the people who formed the population of the zamīndāris, as an insuperable obstacle to rapid administrative improvement in the contiguous areas under *khālsa* jurisdiction. A number of the miscellaneous administrative privileges still left with the zamīndārs were therefore rapidly resumed by Government. The control of their police was withdrawn from the holders of the more open estates in 1888, and from the rest of the zamīndārs in 1892. Chāmpa lost its excise monopoly in 1890 and the rest of the estates in 1893. The management of their pounds was resumed in 1904; and their collection of income and *pāndhri* taxes was put a stop to in 1902; and by these successive steps the zamīndāris were absorbed into the routine administration of the District. The villages of their estates were cadastrally surveyed between 1891 and 1897, and on the basis of this survey a resettlement on regular lines is now in progress. The enquiries instituted in connection with this resettlement exhibit the rapidity with which the zamīndārs have developed in wealth and substance, in their standard of comfort and in their personal importance. During the period through which we have sketched their history they have changed from the weakest and poorest of local officers to well recognised and substantial landed proprietors; and if they reflect on this may find in it much consolation for the loss of rights and privileges inconsistent with the system which has given them their wealth.

8. It does not fall within the scope of this notice to give an adequate account of the general population of the Bilāspur zamīndāris. Of the zamīndārs themselves it must suffice to say that their rise in the social scale has been very rapid in recent years, and curiously enough this development exactly coincides with the period of British rule. In 1795 they were simply 'Cowhier Chiefs' at the head of a 'tribe of mountaineers.' In 1826 they had become 'Kawars who trace their

origin from the Doab of the Jumna and Ganges.' In 1855 they were 'Kanwars a subdivision of Rājputs,' and so too in 1863 they were reported as a 'Kuar (Rājput) clan.' In 1867 a further step was recorded and besides claiming to be 'Rāj-Kawars' and 'Kawar-bansīs' some claimed to be Tawars. At the present time they have all adopted the sacred thread and call themselves simply Kshattris or at least Tawar Kshattris. But in spite of all this their aboriginal descent is beyond all question. It is accepted as a matter of course by the Kawar tribe, while, if proof be needed, we have only to note the names of the zamīndārs' *gotras* which tally in every case with the *gotra* names, not only of the Kawars who are now as a community fairly well advanced, but also of the Dhanuhārs. The latter are among the most backward of all the forest tribes, and are still remarkable for their distaste for plough cultivation and a preference for firing a patch of forest in which by the rudest methods possible a scanty crop is grown. As to the character of the zamīndārs Sir Richard Temple's verdict may still be quoted as on the whole a fair one. The zamīndārs, he says, 'are well disposed but are as 'unenlightened as any men in their position could possibly 'be.' The general population of the zamīndāris is almost wholly non-Aryan, and is clearly distinguished from the low caste, but also most probably non-Aryan, immigrants of later date who came to Bilāspur from Rewah and Bundelkhand. The latter such as the Kurmīs, Telis, Chamārs and village servants and handicraftsmen (Kumhārs, Dhobis and Lohārs) who presumably followed in the wake of the earliest Aryan conquest of the country, only occupied the open lands of Chhattīsgarh, and to this day have made but little effort to intrude into the forests. Gonds, Kawars, Bhaināས, Dhanuhārs, Manjhwārs, Mānjhis, Binjhwārs, Marārs, Pankās, and Gāndas, though still forming collectively a large proportion of the inhabitants of the plains, have only maintained their predominance in the hills. The racial separation seems to be marked by the title of 'Sirdār' given in the east of the Dis-

trict to headmen of the Gond, Kawar, Bhainā, Binjhwār or Marār (Mathwā) tribes. Headmen of the *khālsa* castes are known by the common appellation of Gaontia. It is interesting too to note that methods of agricultural assessment suggest in all the Kawar zamīndāris a much closer connection with the hilly tracts of Sambalpur on the east than with those of Mandlā on the west. The old system of plough-rates, so common in Mandlā and other Districts, is unknown in these estates. The Sambalpur system of assessing rice-land, and rice-land only, was till lately universal, and is still well known in Mātin, Chhuri and Korbā as in all the eastern zamīndāris, also of the Raipur District. Even in Pendrā, which has been largely occupied by Gonds from Rewah and Mandlā, the plough-rate is unknown though still employed in the forests of Pandaria. The general social life is marked by simplicity, by reciprocal assistance in the common agricultural and domestic duties, and by the strength of tribal feeling. Whole villages are often held exclusively by members of a single tribe, who not only admit the fictitious village-family tie but are in some cases all actually related by blood or marriage to the headman. The needs of such a people are simple, and easily satisfied in normal years by the common products of field and forest. They have few extravagances. Marriages are not costly. Indeed an arrangement is often entered into, by which the suitor labours for his prospective father-in-law in payment for his bride. Indebtedness is seldom serious. Drunkenness is, for a forest tract, comparatively rare owing to the predominance of Kabīrpanthīs and of Paikra Kawars, who in their desire for social advancement have long ceased to touch any kind of spirit. Labour is plentiful; the common household necessities, fuel, grass and small timber abound in every village. The tenants' rents are low, the facilities for the disposal of their crops are adequate, and they often supplement their other income by the propagation of lac. Their houses cost them but a few rupees and their clothes are sometimes

woven locally from cotton which they grow themselves. The agricultural community is well established and the labour involved in embanking fields and preparing them for rice has long ago suppressed any tendency, if it ever existed, towards shifting cultivation. The general impression conveyed, even in such a poor season as the present, is that of a simple agricultural people living, perhaps, without much thought for the morrow, but certainly with no anxiety concerning it.

9. A short descriptive account of each zamīndāri is now appended:—

Champa Zamindari :—*Zamīndār*—Rāmsaran Singh, *son of* Prem Singh, *by caste* Tawar Kshattri, *by gotra* Sāndil, *aged* 24.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār; Honorary Magistrate, 3rd class; exemption under Arms Act; title of Dīwān conferred under Native rule.

Debts—Rs. 10,000.

Headquarters, Chāmpa.	Population of zamīndāri in 1901, 25,763.
Number of villages, 64.	
Area of forest, about 10 square miles.	Income from villages, Rs. 20,798.
Area occupied for cultivation, about 40,000 acres.	Income from forest, Rs. 1500.
	Rice area, about 29,000 acres.
Cropped area, about 35,000 acres.	Minor crop area, about 3500 acres.
Total area of the estate, 105 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 3683.

This estate lies in the extreme east of the Bilāspur District along either bank of the Hasdo river, and covers 105 square miles of almost entirely open country. The traditional account of its origin is that the estate was conferred on an ancestor of the zamīndār by Rājā Bāharsahai in 1450 A.D. on account of military service, and the family tree shows the present holder to be the 17th of the house. But as other accounts make it clear that Bāharsahai reigned about 1525 A.D., it seems most improbable that this estate

was constituted until at least 100 years after the traditional date. It was originally known as the Madanpur *chaurāsi*, having its headquarters at the old fort of that name on the Hasdo bank where a few ruins are still visible.

The zamīndāri is unique as being the only *chaurāsi* of the open country which survived the Marāthā rule. How this occurred is told in a petition presented by Bishnāth Singh, a former zamīndār, to the Deputy Commissioner of Raipur in 1855, claiming 37 *khālsa* villages and 24 villages attached to Korbā:—' While Bimbāji Bhonsla ruled in Ratan-'pur a certain Muhammad Khān Tarin who maintained 200 'horse and 500 foot soldiers was serving as his personal 'Sirdār. To this Sirdār were given the five "Parganas" 'of Akaltarā, Lawan, Kakirdā, Kharod and Madanpur. In 'accordance with this grant Muhammad Khān established 'himself with a military force in Jānjgir which then belonged 'to Madanpur. Thither the zamīndār of Madanpur by name 'Chhatra Sai repaired with his two sons, and asked if his 'estate were seized how he and his family were to support 'themselves. The Sirdār replied that it had been given him 'as a jāgīr in return for his military services, and he was 'going to take possession of it. If the zamīndār objected he 'should apply to the Rājā. This Chhatra Sai did, but was 'briefly told that the "Parganas" had been given to the 'Khān Sāhib who would decide about his zamīndāri. 'Accordingly a further application was made to Muhammad 'Khān who compromised by reserving all the well established 'villages for himself leaving the zamīndār with only 23 'villages in the waste land along either bank of the Hasdo 'river. At the same time the two "Barhons" of Umreli 'and Kothāri were made over to the zamīndār of Korbā. This 'happened about 75 years ago (*i.e.*, *circa* 1780 A.D.).' Needless to say nothing came of this petition, but there is no doubt that the story is in the main a true one. The two *barhons* included in Korbā are still known as the *chaubīsa* a later adjunct to the estate, while three isolated villages near Jānjgir, still

in the possession of the Chāmpa zamīndār, confirm the story of his extended possessions in this direction in former times.

The 23 villages along the riverside left with the zamīndār in 1780 have since increased and multiplied. They had risen to 27 in 1855 and to 44 in 1867 and at the present time they number 61. The figures are a striking instance of development in a tract where forest land is of no account. Soils are mostly of a sandy nature, but the villages are very prosperous and well cultivated; while in respect of trade and communications this estate is better situated than any other in Chhattīsgarh. Chāmpa itself is a flourishing town, one of the stations on the main Bengal-Nāgpur Railway which runs through the centre of the estate, and the focus of a vigorous road traffic from the north, south, east, and west. It has a small trading population, and at Bamnidih (9 miles away) the estate can boast a bi-weekly bazar probably unrivalled in the District. Chāmpa is also well known for the quality of the tasar silk (*kosāhi*), woven by resident Koshtās and for its workers in bell-metal (Kasers). There is no proper forest in this estate, the bulk of the zamīndār's income being derived from his villages, all but two of which are under his own immediate control. The zamīndār is a young man who has only recently undertaken the management of his estate. There are five villages in the estate which have more than 1000 inhabitants, *viz.*, Aphrid (1029), Bamnidih (2746), Chāmpa (4315), Kosmandā (1179), and Seoni (1421). At all these places except Kosmandā there are primary schools. There is a police outpost at Chāmpa. There are no *thekedārs* in this estate; two villages are held by inferior proprietors, four by *muāfidārs* and the rest by the zamīndār.

Chhuri Zamindari.—*Zamīndār*—Mahendrapāl Singh, *son of* Thaneshwar Singh, *by caste* Tawar Kshattri, *aged* 26 years, *by gotra* Atri.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār; exemption under Arms Act; title of Pardhān conferred under Native rule. He is an Honorary Magistrate exercising 3rd class powers.

Heir.—Gajendrapāl Singh, *aged* 18, *full brother* of Mahendrapāl Singh.

Debts—Nil.

Headquarters, Chhuri.	Population in 1901, 21,173.
Number of villages, 137.	Income from villages, Rs. 10,787-8-4.
Area of forest, about 229 square miles.	Income from forest, Rs. 8591.
Area occupied for cultivation, about 35,000 acres.	Rice area, about 21,000 acres.
Cropped area, about 30,000 acres.	Minor crop area about 7000 acres.
Total area of estate, 339 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 5061-13-9.

This estate covers 339 square miles and lies in the Jānjgir tahsīl in the centre of what is known as the 'Kawarān' country, surrounded by others of the 'Seven Forts.' The zamīndār's family claims of course a very ancient title, but has probably not been in possession for more than 250 years. Rājā Bāharsahai of Ratanpur, it is said, repulsed about 1520 A.D. an irruption of Muhammadans near an old fort known as Kosgain, which was formerly the headquarters of this zamīndāri. This fort is of considerable interest. Some accounts state that Bāharsahai built the fort, but there is now a general consensus of opinion that it dates from considerably before the sixteenth century, and may possibly have been an outlying stronghold of the old Chedi kingdom from which the Ratanpur Rājās descended into Chhattīsgarh. The local story in its modern form is given in full in the Volume of the Archæological Survey of 1874. This contains an account of how the present 'Chhatri Chief of Chhuri' wrested Kosgain from a Gond chieftain by name Dāma Dhurwā. But any attempt to credit a Gond with the construction of the fort is impossible. It is obviously of Hindu origin, and was built no doubt to command an old trade route, now almost entirely forgotten, which ran along the eastern bank of the Hasdo from the open country near Chāmpa as far as Kosgain, and then wound its way through the hills to Mirzāpur. Possibly this was a petty Hindu chieftaincy conquered by

Bāharsahai, who, when the country was secured, may have entrusted it to the Gond family of Dāma Dhurwā. But these Gonds also subsequently seceded from their allegiance to Ratanpur, and were put to the ban of the Empire and were thus in turn ousted by the present family of Kawars. The estate is intersected by the Hasdo river. On the left bank there is some very wild mountainous country running up to the Uprorā border. On the right bank the prospect is less interesting. Everywhere one finds a stretch of uneven country covered with rapidly thinning jungle interspersed with villages. The bulk of the people are Kawars with a certain number of Gond immigrants from Surgujā (known here as Pachāsi Gonds for what reason is not clear), Rāwats and Pankās. There is a very vigorous trade in lac in this estate which was well established even in the days when the chief commercial value of the product was as a dye. The centre of this trade is at Kathghorā, a single village to the north of the estate granted to a Baniā in Marāthā times and held now in mālguzāri right. *Kosā* cocoons are also largely exported towards Chāmpa and the *khālsa* portions of Bilāspur and Jānjgir. The forests are being rapidly exhausted of their timber by the zamīndār. His father's extravagance necessitated the zamīndāri being brought under official control (Court of Wards in 1887) for about 15 years, and he is now in enjoyment of an inflated income as a result of this period of careful management. Road communications are not good, but no range of hills intervenes between this estate and the open *khālsa* country, and timber is conveyed without difficulty to the Chāmpa station on the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. There are no villages containing more than 1000 inhabitants, except the headquarters town Chhuri which contains 2141 persons and lies about 50 miles north-east of Bilāspur. During the management of the Court of Wards the roads and buildings were under the Chhattīsgarh States Division of the Public Works Department, and during the ten years from 1893 to 1903 Rs. 3400 were spent on them. There is a

branch post office and school at Chhuri, and police outposts at Chhuri and Chaitmā. Of the 137 villages in this estate 21 are held directly by the zamīndār, 4 by rent-free assignees, 18 by inferior proprietors and the rest by *thekedārs*, of whom 38 possess protected status.

Kanteli Zamindari —*Zamīndār*—Lāl Ranjīt Singh, *son of* Thākur Sāhib Lāl, *by caste* Rāj-Gond, *by gotra* Sāndil, *aged* 16.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār.

Heir—Thākur Kanhayā Lāl, *son of* Mangal Singh, *aged* 38.

Debts—*Nil.*

Headquarters, Kanteli.	Population of zamīndāri in 1901, 4715.
Number of villages, 44.	Income from villages, Rs. 12,114.
Area of forest, *nil*.	Income from forest, *nil*.
Area occupied for cultivation, 14,300 acres.	Rice area, 5400 acres.
Cropped area, 13,400 acres.	Minor crop area, 4300 acres.
Total area of estate, 25 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 2200.

This estate like Chāmpa is the relic of an old open country zamīndāri. The story of its seizure by the Marāthās is told in the statement of a former zamīndār recorded in 1866:—' My forefathers were formerly the zamīndārs of ' Mungelī which tract they held for six generations. About ' 68 years ago Nāna Sāhib, the brother of Raghujī I, came to ' Mungelī on his way to Jagannāth Puri. At Mungelī one of ' his followers tried to seize a horse belonging to the zamīn- ' dār's brother. The latter resisted him, false reports were ' made and Phattesingh the zamīndār was arrested and ' carried to Ratanpur. Nāna Sāhib then went forward on ' his pilgrimage and in his absence Kesho Pant, the Sūbahdār, ' blew Phattesingh from a cannon's mouth and confiscated ' the Mungelī pargana The next year the family were given ' the Madanpur tāluk and four years later the Lormi tāluk.

'After this my father Santok Singh came from Lormi and 'seized Mungelī. At this time the country was under 'British officers. My father was arrested and died in 'imprisonment. I was then a child of eight years and subse- 'quently the Madanpur (now known as Kanteli) zamīndāri 'was made over to me. This tract was originally waste and 'was a part of the Mungelī estate held in my family for 'generations, and first granted to Tarwar Singh, my ancestor, 'by Kalyān Sahai, Rājā of Ratanpur.' The Kanteli zamīndāri of the present time is formed of three distinct groups of villages numbering in all 44 villages and covering altogether only 25 square miles. It is an integral part of the surrounding *khālsa* country and is of remarkable fertility. No part of it is further than 12 or 15 miles from Mungelī itself. It has no natural features of interest and no important villages or bazars. The estate has been under Court of Wards management now for more than 25 years, originally owing to the indebtedness of the estate, but latterly owing to the minority of the zamīndār. The family is an ancient one, distantly connected with the Rāj-Gond zamīndārs of Pandaria and Sahaspur-Lohāra. The family in former times were of a somewhat turbulent character. The headquarters, Kantel, contains a school, post office and a police outpost. Of the 44 villages two are held by inferior proprietors, 12 by the zamīndār direct and the rest by *thekedārs*, of whom 15 have received protected status.

Kenda Zamindari.—*Zamīndār*—Thākur Chandrbahān Singh, *son of* Thākur Rām Singh, *by caste* Tawar, *by gotra* Telāsi, *aged* 12.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār; exemption under Arms Act; title of Thākur conferred under Native rule.

Heir—Prasād Singh, *son of* Bohit Singh, *aged* 40.

Debts—*Nil.*

Headquarters, Kendā.	Population in 1901, 15,252.
Number of villages, 85.	Income from villages, Rs. 5289.

Area of forest, about 231 square miles.	Income from forest, Rs. 9312.
Area occupied for cultivation, 28,000 acres.	Rice area, about 13,500 acres.
Cropped area, 21,500 acres.	Minor crop area, about 7500 acres.
Total area of estate, 299 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 2929-12-0.

Kendā is held by a cadet of the Pendrā house. The circumstances under which this estate was added to the original grant of Pendrā are obscure. One account tells how, when the Ratanpur Rājā's army was making a night expedition against the Rewah king, the torches failed for want of oil. Jaskaran, a famous warrior and the son of Hindu Singh of Pendrā, thereupon crushed with his bare hands sufficient mustard seed to make a barrelful of oil, and was rewarded for this feat by the grant of the Kendā *chaurāsi*. The more prosaic story simply states without explanation that the third zamīndār of Hindu Singh's line had two sons, the younger of whom named Sambat Singh was put in charge of Kendā by Rājā Takhat Singh of Ratanpur in Samvat 1691 (A.D. 1634). This account is probably correct, except that as the Kendā family only claim to have held for eight generations and Takhat Singh reigned apparently from about 1675 to 1689, the probable date of the grant would be A.D. 1680.

The possession of Sambat Singh's descendants has never been disturbed. They accepted the change from Rājput to Marāthā and from Marāthā to English rule without demur. They kept the peace with the Sūbahs of Ratanpur and evinced their loyalty to our rule in 1857, and have thus earned the peaceful obscurity in which the intermediate history of their family is hidden. The estate covers 299 square miles and comprises the whole valley of the Arpā river (with its tributary the Jawas) from its issue from the Komo range to where it debouches into the open *khālsa* country. The situation is a picturesque one owing to the massive height of the hills which at every point overlook from either side the

level stretch of forest interspersed with villages. The zamīndār's original importance rested no doubt on the fact that through his estate ran the great trade route between Chhattīsgarh and Hindustān and the pilgrim route between Hindustān and Jagannāth Puri. In the old days this must have meant a good deal, for in 1863 we know from Sir R. Temple's 'Report on the Mahānadi river and adjacent countries' that Rs. 5,32,000 worth of exports and imports were distributed between this and one other trade route between Chhattīsgarh and Mirzāpur. The road is still thronged every year with herds of buffalo brought from Saugor and other northern Districts to the cattle-markets of Bilāspur at Ganiāri and elsewhere. Other traffic has been absorbed of course by the railway, which now runs parallel with the old trade route through Kendā.

Up to 40 years ago wild elephants were common in this estate, and at the present time one solitary beast makes an occasional appearance. But no wild animals of the larger kinds are numerous, as vigorous timber-cutting has been going on all over the forests for some years. The standard of cultivation in the Kendā villages is fairly high; and to the north and south are two small stretches of well developed country. The middle of the estate is mainly forest. At all the railway stations there are small communities of traders, chiefly Muhammadans, who deal in lac and timber, prey upon the simpler jungle-folk, and do much to deprive the country of its primitive simplicity. Kotā, the southernmost of these, is the most prosperous of all and boasts a small match factory. The bulk of the inhabitants are Kawars and Gonds. The estate also forms the eastern limit of the tract within which the Bhumia tribe is found, at any rate under this designation. The estate contains two villages, *viz.*, Amali and Kotā, with a population of over 1000 persons. Kendā itself is an unassuming village, picturesquely situated just below the Komo Ghāt, about 8 miles from the Belgahnā railway station and about 38 from Bilāspur. There is a subordinate police

Station-house at Kotā with an outpost at Kendā. There are primary schools at Billiband and Kotā and branch post offices at Kotā and Belgahnā. Of the 85 villages in this estate 2 are held rent-free, 15 are held by inferior proprietors, 51 by *thekedārs*, of whom 9 have protected status, while the remaining 17 are under the zamīndār's direct management.

Korba Zamindari.—*Zamīndār*—Jāgeshwar Prasād Singh, *son of* Khem Singh, *by caste* Tawar Kshattri, *by gotra* Dhangur, *aged* 25.

Distinctions—Exemption under Arms Act; title of Dīwān conferred under Native rule.

Heir—Pardhān, *aged* 12 years, a *cousin of* Jāgeshwar Prasād Singh.

Debts—*Nil.*

Headquarters, Korbā.

Number of villages, 353.

Area of forest, about 504 square miles.

Area occupied for cultivation, about 125,000 acres.

Cropped area, about 105,000 acres.

Total area of estate, 856 square miles.

Population of zamīndāri in 1901, 59,286.

Income from villages, Rs. 25,764-3-0.

Income from forest, Rs. 13,193.

Rice area, about 75,000 acres.

Minor crop area, about 26,000 acres.

Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 9282-8-3.

Korbā is the largest of the zamīndāris of Bilāspur and is a varied tract of hill and plain, stretching from the extreme north-eastern limits of the Bilāspur District, a tract of wild and mountainous country, to the open and fairly level plains along the lower reaches of the Hasdo. It covers 856 square miles. The origin of the grant is unknown. One traditional account asserts that the founder of the Korbā house conquered a former Gond chieftain, a feat identical with that ascribed to the Chhuri zamīndār, but far less well authenticated by tradition. One thing is certain. Undoubtedly Korbā was a comparatively late addition to the Ratanpur kingdom as it is not mentioned in the extant lists of the old 36 forts of Chhattīsgarh. It is stated by Mr. Chisholm

without any reference to authority, to have been wrested from Surgujā by Rājā Bāharsahai about A.D. 1520, that is, at the time of his repulse of the Muhammadans at Kosgain (see Chhuri). Probably this tract was for long a debatable land between the Rājās of Ratanpur, Sambalpur and Surgujā. The Korbā zamīndār, according to tradition, only held at first a small tract which was taken from a 'Gauria' Rājā, the remains of whose fortified headquarters are still pointed out near Korbā *Khās*. From here the Kawar family ousted other petty zamīndārs from Ranjita and Rāmpur and encroached upon the territories of Kosgain (Chhuri) and Madanpur (Chāmpa). Their position at a distance from Ratanpur encouraged in them a somewhat unruly spirit and they gave constant trouble even in Marāthā times. In consequence of irregularity in the payment of *takolī* the estate was resumed by Bimbāji Bhonsla. His officials were, however, driven out by force, whereupon he compromised by accepting a sum of Rs. 2000 in cash, and restored the estate to the zamīndār Bharat Singh. This zamīndāri like Pandaria in the extreme west is interesting as comprising within its borders the widest extremes of social and agricultural development. On the Surgujā and Uprorā borders there is a large stretch of country as wild and remote as any in Bilāspur. Though nothing is now known of the Binderwās —a cannibal tribe rumoured to exist in this part of the world according to Sir R. Jenkins' report of 1826—yet the Korwās, Mānjhis and Saontās who are found there now are certainly as backward as any tribe in Chhattīsgarh. Of the Saontās it is said that when a member of the tribe falls ill beyond hope of recovery he is bound hand and foot to the bed on which he lies. All those who live in the same village collect their goods, set fire to the house in which the dying man is laid and flee for their lives to another part of the forest. By this means they destroy the evil spirit in the sick man and prevent its transference on his death to another of the tribe. Mānjhis and Korwās have still the reputation

of having been cannibals not many years ago. In particular, the flesh of old people met their fancy, it is said, for these being of a 'ripe' age (*pak gaya*) were most naturally plucked and eaten. At another extreme we find along the *khālsa* border to the south of the estate open closely cultivated villages which vie in fertility with some of the most prosperous portions of the District, and are held by the mixed Hindu castes of this part of the country; while intermediate between the two we have half a dozen grades of forest villages, tribal settlements and semi-open villages increasing in stability and importance as one passes from the north-west to the south-east of the estate.

Under proper management this zamīndāri would be the most wealthy in the District. Excluding iron-ore and coal which, with all other minerals, are the property of Government, the estate contains an unusually large area of *sāl* forest. A report by Sir R. Temple in 1863 speaks of a 'vast '*sāl* forest, 300 square miles in extent, one-fourth of which may 'be considered as first class timber.' But reckless mismanagement and extravagant over-cutting have done untold damage to the estate. At present the zamīndār derives on his own showing an annual income of only 7 pies per acre from his forests. The estate is picturesque, being overlooked by the hills of both Saktī and Uprorā. The people are mostly Kawars and Korwās in the forest, while nearly every caste is represented in the more open villages. There is a well-known Kabīrpanthī shrine at Kudarmāl a few miles south of Korbā *Khās* at which an important fair is held each year in February. At the fair children and other novices are made Kabīrpanthis. Communications with the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway are easy, although no good roads are maintained in this estate. The southern open-country villages lie within a distance of 6 miles of the Chāmpa station on the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway line where large quantities of grain are sold and exported. Cultivation generally is fairly well developed and rents are very low. The practice of sowing rice by

transplantation is universal in the jungle country, and it is interesting to note that it is immediately abandoned as the country becomes clear of forest. Wood for firing in the seed-bed then becomes more difficult to obtain, and at the same time the weeds, which this method is mainly intended to remove, automatically decrease and form a less serious obstacle to the growing rice. The Sambalpur system by which the tenants jointly accept responsibility for the payment of the whole village assessment to the *gaontia* is still well known in the more backward portions of this estate, and is an interesting survival of a method of assessment which we know was one time universal in the Bilāspur District. The zamīndār is a young man whose extravagance and failure to realise the responsibilities of his position have recently brought him into official disfavour. He has no children. His next of kin is a cousin whom it is curious to note has been given a title in the family circle, but has as yet no name although he is 12 years of age. The reason is a superstitious one, to elude the pursuit of evil spirits which it is asserted destroyed the other children of the same parents. Except Korbā itself there is no other village which has more than 1000 inhabitants. The headquarters station with a population of 1835 in 1901 lies on the right bank of the Hasdo river, about 23 miles to the north of Chāmpa railway station. There is a primary school, a branch post office and a police Station-house here. There is also a police outpost at Rāmpur. Of the 353 villages in the estate 3 are held by rent-free assignees, 60 by inferior proprietors, 106 direct by the zamīndār and the rest by *thekedārs*, of whom 67 have gained protected status.

Lapha Zamindari.—*Zamīndār*—Daharāj Singh, *son of* Raghunāth Singh, *by caste* Tawar, *by gotra* Gangākāchul, *aged* 68.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār; Honorary Magistrate, 3rd class; exemption under Arms Act; title of Dīwān conferred under Native rule.

Heir—Rāmsaran Singh, *son of* Daharāj Singh, *aged* 7.
Debts—*Nil.*

Headquarters, Tartūma.	Population in 1901, 12,017.
Number of villages, 86.	Income from villages, Rs. 5226-13-3.
Area of forest, about 259 square miles.	Income from forest, Rs. 5723.
Area occupied for cultivation, about 21,000 acres.	Rice area, about 11,000 acres.
Cropped area, about 17,000 acres.	Minor crop area, about 3500 acres.
Total area of estate, 359 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 2805-4-4.

This estate lies on the edge of the open plain of Bilāspur, its southern border being only some 2 or 3 miles north of Ratanpur. It contains some ancient monuments of considerable interest—a fort at Lāphagarh ; a temple at Pāli, and the relics of an ancient town at Tumāna behind the hills towards the Uprorā border to which reference has been made elsewhere. The Lāpha zamīndāri was a creation of the Haihayavansī kings long after they were established in Ratanpur. But the family history is obscure, as the zamīndār claims to be a full-blown Kshattriya who came from Delhi more than a thousand years ago. These absurd pretensions involve the suppression of the historical origin of the grant. He possesses a copper-plate inscription which has recently been examined by Mr. Hira Lāl[1] and declared by him to be a forgery. This plate purports to convey the grant by Rājā Prithvīdeva of 120 villages to Lungā Rao, an ancestor (so it is said) of the present zamīndār. It is dated Samvat 806, and would thus require one to believe that the present family have been in possession of the Lāpha zamīndāri for the last 1160 years. The zamīndār apparently believes that the inscription is a genuine one. But he himself only claims to have held the estate for 21 generations while his father in 1855 claimed only 16. Either of these figures is an exaggeration and both together would fail to bridge the enormous gap of 1160 years since the alleged creation of the estate. Lāpha

[1] Epigraphia Indica, Vol. IX, page 293 and following.

is among the smaller of the zamīndāris and covers 369 square miles. More than half of the estate to the north is very wild, and is thinly populated by Mānjhis, Mahatos, Binjhwārs, Dhanuhārs and other backward aboriginal tribes. Along the *khālsa* border there are a number of fairly prosperous villages held mostly by Kawars, Gonds and Rāwats, but even here the ground is uneven and soils poor, and the standard of cultivation is not very high. Only one village (Pondi) has a population of more than 1000 persons. Fair-weather tracks connect the estate with Kendā and Korbā.

An important high road runs from Chhuri and Kathghorā on the old Mirzāpur trade route through the Lāpha estate to Ratanpur. The Lāpha jungles are a favourite resort of those in need of house timber, and are unique in being fairly well preserved from reckless over-cutting. There is abundant iron-ore found at the village of Burbur and a number of Agarias make their living by it. The zamīndār's headquarters are at Tartūma (known also as Lāpha), a village with a population of 665, situated below Lāphagarh and about 25 miles east of the Belgahnā station in the Kendā zamīndāri. It is however most conveniently approached through Ratanpur. The hills are picturesque. The best known are Chitorgarh (on which Lāpha fort is built), Palmā, and Dhitori—all of them, according to the popular belief, relics of the Pāndava Bhimsen. He was out gathering fruits and herbs with one basket (*dhitori*) in his hand, and two more slung on a yoke across his shoulder. Suddenly hearing that his house was on fire he dropped them where they lie to this day, and fled home. The conversion of these relics into hill and rock is no matter of astonishment to the local peasant. It is believed, and unhesitatingly believed by the common people that the gods and heroes who walked the earth in the 'Satyug' still live in the stone images found in old ruins and temples scattered here and there about the countryside. Every old ruin belongs to the days of old when, according to their simple cosmology, Rāmchandra and the Pāndavas created the earth gradually by

hurling the mountains into the sea. As they worked they dug tanks and threw up temples to bear their names through the ages, and then having fashioned the country for the succeeding generations of mankind were gradually frozen into stone by their ingratitude and wickedness. There are in all 86 villages in the Lāpha zamīndāri; 3 are held rent-free by assignees, 12 by subproprietors, 29 by the zamīndār direct, and the remaining 42 by *thekedārs*, of whom 5 have gained protected status.

Matin Zamindari.—*Zamīndārin*—Musammāt Kanchan Kuar, *widow of* Gajrūp Singh, *by caste* Kawar, *by gotra* Tilāsi, *aged* 55.

Distinctions of late zamīndār—Exemption under Arms Act; title of Dīwān conferred under Native rule.

Heir—Disputed.

Debts—*Nil.*

Headquarters, Mātin.	Population in 1901, 11,755.
Number of villages, 91.	Income from villages, Rs. 3,444.
Area of forest, about 455 square miles.	Income from forest, Rs. 6,618.
Area occupied for cultivation, about 15,000 acres.	Rice area, about 8000 acres.
Cropped area, about 13,000 acres.	Minor crop area, about 4500 acres.
Total area of estate, 544 square miles.	Total contribution to Government, Rs. 1,331-7-9.

This is another zamīndāri held by a cadet of the Pendrā house. The early history of the estate is interesting because we have here incontrovertible evidence of a Rāj-Gond zamīndār who preceded the Kawar family. The descendants of this Gond zamīndār still live at the village of Sirri on the north-west border of Mātin, and claim to have been settled there for 22 generations. Till within quite recent years they held an entire *barhon* or *tāluk* of twelve villages, which they retained when they lost their hold on the *chaurāsi*. Their former tenure of the estate is admitted by the present holders. The traditional account relates that in Samvat 1699 (A.D. 1642) Kalyān Singh, a younger son of the Uprorā zamīndār Himmat Rai, occupied Mātin, probably by force, as there is a

tradition that he was afterwards murdered by Tarphana Gond (of Sirri), his predecessor. The estate is said to have been confirmed in Kalyān Singh's possession by Rājā Rāj Singh, the last but two of the Haihayavansī house, who reigned from about 1699 to 1720 A.D. We may therefore fix the date of the Gond's dispossession at about the same period.

The estate is in many ways similar to Uprorā with which it is so closely connected. It is situated on the uplands of the Vindhyan range in the extreme north of the District and shares with Uprorā the pride of place, as the wildest of all the Bilāspur zamīndāris. Its dismal reputation among the patwāris of the District is expressed in the doggerel verse—

Zahr piye nā māhur khae,
Mare ke hoe to Mātin jae.

'See Mātin—and die.' Certainly the average Hindu finds little to attract him in this stretch of country, and the pressure of population at the last census was only 22 to the square mile. It is therefore all the more curious to find that this was the first and only zamīndāri of Bilāspur visited and described by a European during the eighteenth century. This unique account is contained in a Diary descriptive of his journey from Chunārgarh to Rājahmundry written by Captain Blunt in 1795. The following quotation from it is of interest as showing the very primitive condition both of the Kawar zamīndārs and of their people only a century ago:—
'We arrived this day at *Pory*, having left some lofty 'ranges of hills to the westward. At this place a *Cowhier* 'chief came to visit me; or rather his curiosity brought him 'to see a white man. He was accompanied by his son, and 'grandson; both stout and large limbed men for mountaineers, 'though not so well shaped as the *Gonds*. We stared at 'each other a little while; for our languages being totally 'unintelligible to each other, we could hold no conversation 'until a *Byraghy Fakeer* who had wandered into these wilds,

'tendered his services as interpreter. All that I could 'collect from this chief was that in these mountains there 'are seven small districts, called *Chowrasseys*, containing 'nominally eighty-four villages; but that, in reality, not more 'than fifteen were then in existence[1]. That they were all 'considered as belonging to the *Purgunnah* of *Mahtin* 'and that the tribute they paid to the *Mahratta* Government, 'which consisted in grain, was very inconsiderable. The '*Mahrattas* kept it up to retain their authority among the 'mountaineers, who, if not kept in subjection, were con-'stantly issuing into the plain country to plunder. I inquired 'of him, if there had ever existed a *Cowhier Rajah* or 'independent chief of any kind; to which he replied, that 'the country had formerly been subject to the *Rewah* '*Rajah* of *Bogalecund*, and that, about thirty years since, 'the *Mahrattas* had driven him out; having in the contest 'very much impoverished and depopulated the country. 'The conversation was carried on under much disadvant-'age; for it was evident our interpreter understood but 'imperfectly the language of *Cowhier*. The old man, 'whose attention had been chiefly attracted by a *Ramnaghur* '*Morah*,[2] of which he was desirous to know the construction, 'being satisfied as to that point, now took his leave, and depart-'ed. We arrived at *Mahtin* about an hour before noon, and 'encamped on the east bank of the river *Taty*. Near this 'place (bearing north about one mile distant) is a very pic-'turesque mountain, called by the *Cowhiers*, *Mahtin Dey*. 'With my telescope I discovered a little flag on the summit 'of it; and on inquiring the reason, I was informed that it 'was to denote the residence of the Hindoo Goddess Bhavāni. 'This day being *Hooly*,[3] the mountaineers were celebrating 'the festival, by singing, and dancing, in a very rude manner, 'to the sound they produced by beating a kind of drum,

1 That is presumably in the case only of the Mātin Chaurāsi.

2. A kind of stool, made of wicker work, and cotton thread.

3. A Hindu festival at the spring.

'made with a skin stretched over an earthen pot. They 'seemed to be totally uninformed as to the origin or meaning 'of the festival; nor was there a *Brāhman* among them, to 'afford them any information on that subject. I am inclined 'to think that they are a tribe of low Hindus; but being so 'very illiterate, and speaking a dialect peculiar to themselves 'any inquiries into their history, manners, and religion would 'have been little satisfactory.' There are at the present time a few good villages in the north-east of the estate, but elsewhere the country is as a rule too undulating and irregular to permit of extended cultivation. There is a Roman Catholic Mission at Pasan, a good village near the western border. A fair road constructed when the estate was under Court of Wards (from 1878—1891) runs through it connecting Mātin with Pendrā on the west and Chhuri on the south-east. The jungles are valuable and extensive though they are being rapidly deprived of all good timber by a succession of contractors. *Dahia* cultivation and the practice of ringing *sāl* trees for resin are also permitted and must involve a great deal of waste. Elephants were formerly very common, and *khedda* operations took place here in 1867 and also about 1884. The animals are now scarce and do no very serious damage to cultivation. The estate has been considerably affected by the opening of the Katnī Branch line, which, though 30 miles distant, is still easily accessible for carts; and should be capable of good development even though the culturable area must always be somewhat limited. Unfortunately there are now, and have been for the last 40 years, continuous disputes about the title of rival claimants to succeed the widows of the last zamīndār. Feelings have long been embittered and in consequence the management of the estate has been defective. The advisability of putting some official restraint upon the zamīndārin's management is under consideration at the present time. There is no village in the estate which contains more than 1000 persons. Mātin itself contains 300. There are no schools. There

is one police outpost at Mātin. Of the 91 villages in this estate 3 are held by inferior proprietors, 75 by *thekedārs*, of whom 15 have protected status, while 13 are managed directly by the zamīndār.

Pandaria Zamindari :—*Zamīndār*—Raghurāj Singh, *son of* Gajpāl Singh, *by caste* Rāj-Gond, *by gotra* Pulastya, *aged* 30.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār; Honorary Magistrate, 2nd class; exemption under Arms Act; title of Thākur conferred under Native rule.

Debts—Nil.

Headquarters, Pandaria.	Population of zamīndāri in 1901, 49,222.
Number of villages, 301.	Income from villages, Rs. 62,303.
Area of forest, about 191 square miles.	Income from forest Rs. 13,096.
Area occupied for cultivation, 158,631 acres.	Rice area, 29,432 acres.
Cropped area, 89,741 acres.	Minor crop area, 30,880 acres.
Total area of estate, 487 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 30,580.

The Pandaria estate lies in the extreme west of the District in the Mungelí tahsīl. Its length from north to south is 32 miles, and from east to west 23 miles. The northern half is forest and hill, but the southern half forms a fine spread of open country of first-class agricultural capacity. The old headquarters of the estate were at Kāmthi—a village now in the heart of the forest country. There are relics there of an ancient settlement. It is said that many old sculptured stones were removed to Setgangā, a village on the eastern border of the estate in open country, to construct the modern shrine which now stands there. In Kāmthi itself a stone image of a tiger is almost the only object of interest which now survives. This has been referred to in other accounts as a 'tiger god' the relic of an aboriginal cult. But this is doubtful; possibly it guarded the Singh Darwāza, or main entrance of some old fortification. Pandaria is the premier zamīndāri of the Bilāspur District and holds a unique position as the only estate included in the

District which was never a *chaurāsi* of the Haihayavansī kingdom. It never became an integral part of Chhattīsgarh proper, and hence does not appear in the more authentic lists of the old 36 forts. According to the traditional history this tract of country was originally held by a Lodhi chieftain who owed allegiance to the kings of Garhā Mandlā. But in 1546 A.D. he rebelled against his master, who put him to 'the ban of the Empire' and eventually secured his overthrow at the hands of a certain Shām Chand, a Rāj-Gond and an ancestor of the present zamīndār of Pandaria. With the consent of the subordinate Rājā of Lānji, Shām Chand was confirmed in his possession of Pandaria, which was then known as *Mukutpur Pratābgarh.* Dalsai, the seventh in direct descent from Shām Chand, had two sons, Pirthī Singh and Mahābali, the younger of whom received the estate of Kawardhā about A. D. 1760. The Pandaria zamīndāri is said to have been in the possession of the present family for the last 14 generations. The zamīndār is a Rāj-Gond of distinguished lineage. He claims connection by blood with the Rājā of Makrai, and by marriage with the chief of Sārangarh, and the zamīndārs of Phuljhar and Kanteli. Members of his family hold the zamīndāri of Sahaspur as well as Kawardhā and Pandaria. Pandaria, or Mukutpur Pratābgarh, seems throughout its history to have been a debatable ground between the kingdoms of Garhā Mandlā, Lānji and Chhattīsgarh, and tradition says that there were constant disputes as regards the title to claim its tribute. A Pratābgarh was mentioned in an old Haihaya Revenue Book as one of the old Ratanpur Tributary States, and as it is mentioned in conjunction with Rāmgarh it may with some probability be identified with Pandaria[1]. But local tradition all favours the connection with Garhā Mandlā. However this may be, it is fairly clear that the division of authority bred a spirit of insubordination in the zamīndārs of this estate. In 1795 Captain Blunt records the information that 'ever since the Mahrattās had attempted to subdue the

[1] Elliot's Raipur Settlement Report, para. 56.

'*Pertābgur Goands* who inhabit the ills tho the westward of '*Ruttunpour*, there had been a continual warfare between 'them,' and in fact it was a danger of molestation by the '*Pertābgarh Goand Rājā*' which compelled him to relinquish 'with much mortifying reflection and disappointment' his intended visit to Amarkantak. Again, when the flight of Appa Sāhib in 1818 was the signal for general disturbances throughout the Nāgpur country, these disturbances received 'some countenance but not openly' from the zamīndār of Pandaria; and once more in the Mutiny times the family was suspected of intriguing with the Sohāgpur rebels. When therefore the position of the various estate holders was reviewed by Sir R. Temple, the status of feudatory chief conferred on the junior branch of the family in Kawardhā was not extended to Pandaria; and this fine estate has thus under our rule come to be classed with zamīndāris which originally held a far less independent position. Since the formation of the Bilāspur District the zamīndār's mismanagement and extravagance have more than once brought the estate under Government control, from which it was finally released only eight years ago. But the estate still holds the foremost place among the Bilāspur zamīndāris. The southern half is a continuation of the open fertile country of the Mungelī tahsīl, and thus forms a part of what has been described as one of the finest expanses of culturable land in the Provinces. Communications are excellent, good roads connecting Pandaria with Kawardhā and Mungelī, and also *viâ* Lormi with the Kargi Road railway station on the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. Large sums were spent on public works while the estate was under Court of Wards. Matters were during that period under the control of the Chhattīsgarh States Division of the Public Works Department and between 1893 and 1903 Rs. 67,968 were spent on roads and buildings. Hence Pandaria is almost unique as a zamīndār's headquarters which is in appearance something more than an ordinary cluster of mud-walled houses.

The people are prosperous in spite of most amazing losses in the famines of 1897 and 1900. The bulk of the inhabitants are Kurmīs, Chamārs and Kshattris. There is a traditional hostility between the two castes last mentioned which is maintained especially in those villages where a Kshattri headman is introduced as a check upon a body of unruly Chamār tenants. The jungles are valuable and fairly well preserved. Lac is an important minor product, and its cultivation is controlled by a European firm now established here for several years. Much of the forest land is very wild. Indeed the most striking feature of the zamīndāri lies in the remarkable extremes of social and agricultural development which are found within this area of 487 square miles A single march takes one from an open densely populated and thriving agricultural tract to mountains and forests towards the Mandlā border famed as a home for tigers, and inhabited by probably the most backward forest tribe in the Central Provinces. There are only two villages in the zamīndāri which have more than 1000 inhabitants, *viz.*, Pandaria (3322) and Pāndatarai (1269). There is a police Station-house at Pandaria and outposts at Dullāpur and Pendri. There is a vernacular middle school and a girls' primary school at Pandaria, and primary schools at Pāndatarai, Khapri Kalān and Kūnda. There are post offices at Pandaria and Pāndatarai. Of the 301 villages of the estate, 23 are under direct management, three are held by *muāfidārs* and *nemnukdārs*, 32 by inferior proprietors and 243 by *thekedārs*, of whom 109 have been granted protected status.

Pendra Zamindari.—*Zamīndārin*—Musammāt Bhūp Kunwar Thakurain, *widow of* Indrapāl Singh also called Upendra Dās Singh, *by caste* Tawar (Kshattri), *by gotra* Kairav, *aged* 32.

Distinctions of late zamīndār—Seat in Darbār; exemption under Arms Act; title of Lāl conferred under Native rule.

Heir—Musammāt Chandan Kunwar, *2nd widow of* Upendra Singh, *aged* 27.

Debts—Rs. 3000.

Headquarters, Pendrā.	Population zamīndāri in 1901, 53,370.
Number of villages, 210.	Income from villages, Rs. 10,409.
Area of forest, about 461 square miles.	Income from forest, Rs. 12,754.
Area occupied for cultivation, 118,000 acres.	Rice area, about 49,000 acres.
Cropped area, about 81,000 acres.	Minor crop area, about 16,500 acres.
Total area of the estate, 774 square miles.	Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 6303.

The authority of the Kawar zamīndārs of Pendrā was established about 1600 A.D. by the Rājās of Ratanpur. The traditional date of the grant is Samvat 1533 (*i.e.*, 1476 A.D.). But their genealogical table, and the firm and widely known tradition that they have held the estate for 11 generations, make it imperative to fix their first appointment at a much later date. The legendary beginnings of the family greatness are recorded at length both in Mr. Chisholm's account of 1867, and in a lengthy report on this estate written by the Deputy Commissioner of Raipur in 1860 and preserved in his office. The narrative, which tells how Hindu Singh and Chhindu Singh found a bag of money by the roadside and brought it untouched to the Rājā of Ratanpur, who in recognition of their honesty conferred on them the Pendrā *chaurāsi*, is somewhat unconvincing. The only point of interest is the absence of all mention of any previous holder who was dispossessed, or of any signal military service by which the grant was merited.

There was in ancient times long before the days of Hindu Singh a strong Aryan settlement in this estate, as is proved by the presence of very extensive ruins at Dhanpur, some ten miles north of Pendrā town, some account of which is given in volume VII of General Cunningham's Archæological Survey. The temples here, said to be Jain, are assigned to a period not later than the ninth century A.D. Brahmanical history of course points to these, as to all other ruins of

antiquity, as but another proof of Haihaiya greatness. Local tradition says that Dhanpur and the country both above and below the Komo Ghāt was held at one time by a certain Rājā Ghughus, apparently a Gond. A curious old tank called Darsāgar buried in the jungles of the Kendā zamīndāri is also attributed to him, and in Dhanpur itself a huge rock some 20 feet high rudely fashioned into human shape is said to be his image. But both the Brāhman stories and the local traditions are certainly at fault. We know from inscriptions that Komo was one of the old *mandalas* or forts of the Chedi kingdom of Tripuri. It was from very early times therefore in the hands of Rājput chieftains. And it seems almost inevitable that one should identify the head-quarters of this Komo *mandala* with the ancient town of Dhanpur. But the guarding of the famous Komo pass being obviously the first duty of the Dhanpur chieftain, this, the better known name, was naturally given to the whole estate. Hindu Singh never held Dhanpur. He was merely a creation of the Ratanpur Rājās several hundred years after their power had been established above the Komo Ghāt by the famous soldier Jagapāl. From Pandriban or Pendrā Hindu Singh's family rapidly extended its influence over the surrounding country, and within a hundred years of his receiving the *chaurāsi* we find that cadets of the same house had established themselves in Kendā, Mātin and Uprorā Here they maintained themselves even after the Marāthā conquest which shortly followed their establishment. But in 1798 the zamīndār of Pendrā fell into disfavour. The old zamīndārs of Nawāgarh and Mungelī in the plains had recently been executed on a suspicion of disloyalty, and fearing a similar fate Pirthi Singh of Pendrā failed to attend when summoned before the Sūbah at Ratanpur. Without more ado his estate was confiscated by Kesho Govind, the Sūbah, and he himself had to take refuge in a 'pilgrimage.' The estate was first entrusted to a Gond. But in 1804 A.D. it appears that the zamīndār of Sohāgpur made an inroad into Pendrā and

succeeded in setting fire to the town. Dhan Singh, a Jamādār of artillery in the Bhonsla's service, defeated the invaders and was given charge of the estate. But in 1818 when Colonel Agnew came to Chhattīsgarh he at once restored Ajīt Singh to his ancient heritage. He held that Pirthi Singh, who had meanwhile died, had been expelled 'without any apparent good cause,' and, as Ajīt Singh had been loyal to the British Government during the disturbances in Chhattīsgarh at this time, he decided to repay his services and at the same time win the confidence of the general body of zamīndārs by restoring this old family to its hereditary possessions.

Since 1818 Pendrā has enjoyed the same uneventful history and has developed on the same easy lines as the rest of the Bilāspur estates. Throughout the Mutiny the family was unswervingly faithful to the British rule, and during the Sohāgpur rebellion of 1857-58 rendered good assistance against their hereditary foe. The memory of this time is still fresh in the people's mind, and 'the ascent of Baron Sāhib' (Captain the Baron von Meyern, who was in charge of the operations in Sohāgpur) affords a convenient fixed point in dealing with local chronologies. When the Mutiny was over, the sacred Hill of Amarkantak, formerly the extreme south-west corner of the Pendrā zamīndāri, was handed over to the Rājā of Rewah in return for his more signal services on the Government's behalf. To recompense the zamīndār for this, an annual remission of Rs. 700 from his revenue contribution was sanctioned in 1859, and has been enjoyed by him and his successors now for 50 years.

The estate at the present time is perhaps the most attractive in the District, occupying the north-western corner of the Bilāspur tahsīl. It is a wide plateau over 700 square miles in extent. Though surrounded on three sides by the Maikal mountain range and its offshoots, it is over 2000 feet above the sea-level. It is the most important watershed in Central India and, besides the Nerbudda and Johilā, which take their rise on its western border, the Arpā flowing south

and the Son flowing north connect it, in sentiment at least, with the Mahānadi and the Ganges. It combines stretches of good open country in the north and centre with stretches almost of more value to the zamīndār on the east, west and south of *sāj* and *sāl* forests. The Bilāspur-Katnī railway line runs through the estate and makes communication easy with the outside world. Its construction involved much labour and engineering skill, and the story goes that more than mere physical difficulties had to be coped with. A Jogi and his two huge serpents 30 cubits in length objected to the cutting of the Khodrī tunnel, and set a curse upon the project, in consequence of which the coolies working on the line were decimated by disease. The estate owing to the minority of the zamīndār remained under the Court of Wards from 1881 to 1901. Its finances are now in a very flourishing condition. Pendrā town is already an important trade centre, and under judicious management the zamīndāri promises, in spite of inferior soils and a backward peasantry, to rival before long the prosperity of the *khālsa* country. To those who find an interest in the fiscal organisation of former days the estate is remarkable as having, alone among the zamīndāris of Bilāspur, preserved into recent times its ancient subdivisions of *barhons* or twelve-village groups. These were formerly ubiquitous, and were held by dependants of the zamīndārs, as the zamīndārs themselves held from the lord paramount of Ratanpur. There are traces of them in the *khālsa* as well as in all the zamīndāris. But in Pendrā the system was in full swing until abruptly broken up by Colonel Vertue in 1881, when the estate first came under the Court of Wards. A full list of these old *barhons* is given in the report of 1860, and the *Bārah gaon ke Thākur* are still well known and recognised among the Pendrā people to the present day. The zamīndār of Pendrā, a young man of 27, died in 1907, and in the absence of an eligible successor Government control has had to be imposed once more. The estate contains two villages, *viz.*,

Bacharwār and Gaurelā which have more than 1000 inhabitants, besides Pendrā itself with a population of 2457 persons This, the headquarters town, is 5 miles from the Pendrā Road station on the Katnī Branch of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway, 63 miles from Bilāspur. There is a police Stationhouse at Pendrā with a subordinate outpost at Marwāhi There is a vernacular middle school at Pendrā, and five primary schools at Gaurelā, Marwāhi, Parāsi, Bharridānd and Neosā There is a dispensary at Pendrā, with accommodation for four in-patients. A 2nd class road runs from Pendrā nearly as far as Amarkantak, and 3rd class roads connect Pendrā with Parāsi to the north and with Jatangā to the east. While the estate was under Court of Wards' management large sums were spent on Public Works by the Chhattīsgarh States Division of the Public Works Department. A residence was constructed for the zamīndār at a cost of Rs. 47,978, while the total expenditure incurred on this and similar projects during the ten years from 1893 to 1903 was Rs. 1,32,863. Of the 210 villages in this zamīndāri two are held by rent-free assignees, 50 by inferior proprietors, 148 by *thekedārs*, while the remaining 10 are managed direct by the zamīndār. The *thekedārs* of 34 villages have received 'protected status.'

Uprora Zamindari.—*Zamīndār*-Rudrasaran Partab Singh, *son of* Tribhuwan Prasād Singh, *by caste* Tawar, *by gotra* Kairav, *aged* 12.

Distinctions—Seat in Darbār; exemption under Arms Act; title of Dīwān conferred under Native rule.

Heir—Adit Partāb Singh, *son of* Tribhuwan Prasād Singh, *aged* 9.

Debts—Nil.

Headquarters, Pondi.

Number of villages, 79.

Area of forest, about 398 square miles.

Area occupied for cultivation, about 8000 acres

Population of zamīndāri in 1901, 6,458.

Income from villages, Rs. 2834-150.

Income from forest, Rs. 4042.

Rice area about 5000 acres.

Cropped area, about 7500 acres. Minor crop area, about 2000 acres.

Total area of estate, 448 square miles. Zamīndār's total contribution to Government, Rs. 1506-0-4.

This estate is also held by a junior branch of the Pendrā family. Jaskaran, the son of Hindu Singh of Pendrā, had two children Pūranmal and Churāwanmal. Himmat Rai, the son of Churāwanmal, descended on the Uprorā *chaurāsi* from Pendrā and seized it, putting to death a Brāhman who had previously held the estate. For this offence he was captured, it is said, and thrown into prison by the Rājā of Ratanpur. But a faithful follower of his, a Moharia Gānda, and by caste a musician, like another Blondel refused to abandon his master in captivity. He went to Ratanpur and played outside the Rājā's palace with such skill and sweetness that the king offered him any gift he chose to name. Whereupon he secured the release of Himmat Rai, who was also permitted to retain his ill-gotten estates. Himmat Rai's traditional date is Samvat 1641 (A. D. 1584), but following the dates indicated by the Pendrā genealogy he cannot have lived much before A.D. 1675. Between Himmat Rai and the present holder of the estate 13 generations are said to have elapsed, but it is almost certain that several of these have been interpolated.

Uprorā is the wildest and least accessible of all the Bilāspur zamīndāris. It lies in the extreme north-east of the District in the uplands of the Vindhya range, behind the Chhuri and Korbā zamīndāris. It is 448 square miles in extent, and is nearly the same size as the Pandaria zamīndāri but, except for some 30 villages to the south-west, it is a mass of hill and forest broken only by occasional clearings. The aspect of the tract is that of a vast mountain wilderness, range after range of hills succeeding each other, the intervening valleys sometimes covered with forest, at others comparatively open and clear. Some of them are dotted with villages but in most cases the hamlets are isolated and apart. The pressure of population at the last census was only 14 to

the square mile. To the east of the estate stands the Binaltā hill rising to nearly 4000 feet above the sea-level. The top of this hill forms a tableland 8 or 9 square miles in extent, well supplied with water, and was, at any rate in former days, a grazing ground for numerous herds of bison. The northern half of the zamīndāri still continues to be a favourite resort of wild elephant. An old trade route between Ratanpur and Mirzāpur ran through the west of the estate before the railway was opened. It is at present little used. The Hasdo river, which forms during part of its course the boundary between Uprorā and Mātin, finally breaks eastward across the former zamīndāri towards Chhuri and Korbā. It has a few tributaries of local importance. Communications generally are defective. The estate has never been under Court of Wards. The zamīndār's management is slack, and little is done to rescue the estate from being, as it is at present, by far the most backward of the Bilāspur zamīndāris. The forest tribes are numerous in this country, the best known of whom are the Korwās and Saontās. There are no villages in the estate which have more than 1000 inhabitants. The village of Uprorā has a population of only 85 There are no schools. There is a police outpost at Pondi. Of the 79 villages in the estate, 5 are held by inferior proprietors, 45 by *thekedārs* of whom 6 have obtained protected status, while the remaining 29 are managed directly by the zamīndār. The zamīndār is a minor and it is intended to take his estate under the management of the Court of Wards.

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